THE HISTORY OF THE HOLY BIBLE.

AS CONTAINED

In the Old and New Teſtament.

ATTEMPTED IN

EASY VERSE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOLUME THE THIRD.

Containing the SACRED HISTORY, from the Anointing of Saul, to the Babyloniſh Captivity.

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THE

HISTORY

OF THE

HOLY BIBLE.

BOOK VI.

FROM THE

Anointing of Saul, to the Death of Solomon:

CONTAINING

The Tranſactions of about 120 Years.

BRITISH MUSEUM

HISTORY THE FIRST.

The Reign of Saul, the first King of Israel.

1 *Samuel*, ch. x. *to the End.*

AT Mizpeh now the tribes appear,
Summon'd by Samuel to come there;
When to the hoſt the prophet ſpake:
Since you reſolve a king to make,
Repeatedly your ſuit maintain,
Rejecting ſtill your GOD to reign,
JEHOVAH's choice you muſt abide;
The perſon let the lots decide.—
The lots they caſt, the man to ſee,
And Saul, the ſon of Kiſh, was he;
The tall young man upon whoſe head
Th' anointing oil ſo late was ſhed.
For him they ſearch'd the tribes around,
But the young king could not be found.
By GOD's direction then they went,
And found him hid within his tent:

Then forth with loud acclaim they bring,
And joyful ſhout GOD ſave the king;
Who ſtands amongſt them ſtraight and tall,
And like a tower oe'rlooks them all.

The prophet, to prevent debate,
Proceeds with care to fix the ſtate;
And by Divine Direction draws
A body of peculiar laws.
Before the LORD the precepts lie,
To which the people may apply.

Then to attend the new-made king
A band of choice young men they bring:
With theſe to Gibeah he proceeds,
And meditates immortal deeds.
But ſome amongſt the tribes gave vent
To murmuring cares and diſcontent;
With cold contemptuous look behave,
Nor think a Benjamite can ſave:
To him no tribute will they give,
Or kindly wiſh him long to live.

The prudent prince forbears to ſtain
With care the entrance of his reign,
And not the leaſt reſentment ſhews,
But with his guards rejoicing goes;
Yet long enjoys not his repoſe:
The ſound of war at diſtance breeds,
And calls him forth to mighty deeds.
Bold Nahaſh, Ammon's haughty king,
From Rabbah's plains preſumes to bring
His numerous armies to the field:
To them the men of Gilead yield.
But griev'd by his inſulting claim,
Their embaſſy to Gibeah came,
Informing Saul of their diſtreſs.
Willing their grievance to redreſs,
He ſummons all the tribes with ſpeed,
Who boldly to the war proceed.
All night they march'd: At break of day
Arriving where the armies lay,
They fall upon them by ſurprize,
And who preſumes to face them dies: The

The reſt are ſcatter'd o'er the plains,
And two together ſcarce remains.
To Samuel then the tribes apply;
Now let, they urge, the wretches die
Who view the king with ſcornful eye;
A king who hath ſo bravely fought.—
The generous prince abhors the thought:
God hath, he cries, ſalvation wrought;
The general joy we will not ſtain,
Nor ſhall this day a man be ſlain.—
To Gilgal then the tribes repair,
And join in vaſt rejoicings there:
Saul for their king united own,
And firmly fix his riſing throne.
To great JEHOVAH victims blaze,
And loud and general was the praiſe.
And now the ſeer proceeds at large
To give his laſt moſt ſolemn charge:
His own integrity maintains,
And of the people much complains.

You've

You've done, he cries, a wicked thing,
Rejecting God, to ask a king,
As God will shew.—While thus he spoke,
Full o'er their heads the thunder broke:
The people hear, with vast dismay,
And beg the man of God to pray.
The prophet for the nation prays,
And bids them follow righteous ways,
Which will increasing blessings bring
Both to themselves and to their king.

Two years great Saul the sceptre sway'd,
And all the land his voice obey'd:
Three thousand men his choice detains;
With Jonathan, his son, remains
One thousand; with himself the rest;
The armies then the king dismist:
When soon the warlike prince proceeds
To emulate his father's deeds;
And with his guards undaunted goes,
And boldly smites his country's foes.

The Philiſtines ariſe in wrath,
And bring their mighty armies forth:
They with a moſt amazing force
Of warlike chariots, and of horſe,
Encamp at Michmaſh. In diſmay
The Iſraelites deſert the day;
Nor can the king his troops detain:
Six hundred only now remain.
Broken, diſcourag'd, and diſtreſt,
To dens and caves retir'd the reſt;
And ſome, the more ſecure to hide,
Had croſs'd great Jordan's ſwelling tide.
Seven days the king at Gilgal ſtaid,
Depending on the prophet's aid;
Such was the appointment of the ſeer,
But Samuel did not yet appear.
In deep diſtreſs, the impatient king
Commands the ſacrifice to bring.
The victim ſlays without the fire,
And feeds himſelf the ſacred fire:

But

But ere the offering ceas'd to flame
The prophet to the altar came:
He chides the monarch for the deed,
And then declares God hath decreed
To wreſt the ſceptre from his hand,
And to inveſt with the command
One more obedient to his laws.
Then from the king the ſeer withdraws.

The Philiſtines with joy ſurvey
The dire confuſion and diſmay
Of Iſrael's hoſt. The haughty foe,
Without reſtraint, to plunder go;
And various parties they command
To march all ways, and ſpoil the land.

And now the Eternal God inſpires
With wiſdom and with martial fires
Brave Jonathan, to break the yoke;
Who to his truſty ſervant ſpoke,
Whoſe valour had been often try'd,
When fighting by his maſter's ſide:

No longer let us be diſmay'd,
But, truſting in JEHOVAH's aid,
To yonder lines undaunted go,
And fall with fury on the foe;
The GOD of Iſrael can ſubdue
Alike by numbers or by few.—
Then let the road with ſpeed be trod,
And follow the inſpiring GOD;
In this attempt thy ſervant join'd
Shall not be found to lag behind;
To noble deeds my heart aſpires,
And burns, like thine, with martial fires;
Reply'd the ſervant.—And they twain
A craggy rock's high ſummit gain.
They ſhew themſelves, and ſhake the lance;
The foe beholds, and bids advance.
This was the ſign before agreed
That GOD would Jonathan ſucceed.
Then, like a whirlwind, on the lines
Falls the bold prince; his ſervant joins,

Alike

Alike with ardor draws his ſword,
And follows his victorious lord.
The hoſt beholds their mightieſt fall,
And vaſt amazement ſeizes all:
In mad confuſion, and affright,
Chariots and horſes turn to flight:
The ſcatter'd cars in fragments lie,
By their own ſwords the armies die;
For in the tumult none can know
The friendly legions from the foe.
Earth ſhakes beneath them, and the plain
Is drench'd with blood, and heap'd with ſlain.
From Gibeah's hills the feeble guard
The growing din of diſcord heard;
And they with heart elate ſurvey
The armies, as they melt away:
When, ſoon recovering from their fear,
They fall upon their broken rear:
The battle bleeds, and ſlaughter reigns
Far as Aijalon's diſtant plains;

Till night her ſable mantle ſpread,
In ſolemn ſadneſs, o'er the dead.
When firſt the hot purſuit began,
The monarch cry'd, Curs'd be the man
That ſhall by taſting food this day
The buſineſs of the war delay.—
The prince, not hearing when he ſpoke,
Had the abſurd injunction broke:
For while they thro' thick ſhades purſu'd,
An hollow oak the hero view'd,
Where building high their waxen cells,
A ſwarm of bees in ſafety dwells.
The juicy combs his prize he makes,
And of the luſcious feaſt partakes.
For this the monarch, in a rage,
Commands his death: But to aſſwage
His riſing wrath, the troops appear,
And ſay from guilt the prince is clear;
And, whatſoever be decreed,
Their great deliverer ſhall not bleed.

The

The king ſubmits: And now he grows
Mighty, to cruſh his country's foes.
For valiant men the tribes he ſought,
And theſe into his army brought:
With Moab, Ammon, Edom, fought.
With martial fire he nobly burn'd,
And conquer'd whereſoe'er he turn'd.

But to the king one taſk remain'd,
Which thus the holy ſeer explain'd:
By God's command thou muſt prepare
On Amalek to turn the war:
The impious land to ſlaughter give,
Nor man nor beaſt permit to live.
Let the whole land promiſcuous bleed,
In vengeance for their cruel deed,
Who in the deſert on you broke,
When Iſrael fled from Egypt's yoke.
The monarch heard the high command,
And inſtantly invades the land

With

With a vaſt army. Amalek dies;
In blood and duſt the nation lies;
But the fat kine, and fleecy care,
The conquering troops agree to ſpare:
Theſe ſoon to Gilgal's plain they bring,
And with the reſt the captive king.

To meet the king the prophet came;
Saul greets him in JEHOVAH's name:
I have, ſaid he, fulfill'd the word
Thou lately gav'ſt me from the LORD.—
Then what can mean, replies the ſeer,
This noiſe of cattle which I hear?—
Theſe we have ſpar'd, the king replies,
Before the LORD to ſacrifice:
For this we have reſerv'd the beſt,
The thirſty ſword devour'd the reſt:
The people we to ſlaughter gave,
The captive king alone we ſave.—
The ſeer rejoins, Mark what I ſay,
'Tis always better to obey

And closely follow God's command,
Than for his offering strip a land:
But as, regardless of his word,
Thou hast dar'd to disobey the Lord,
His voice rejecting, thou shalt see
He also hath rejected thee;
And quickly will bestow thy crown
On one more worthy.—With a frown
The prophet then commands to bring
Before his face the captive king.
In rich array the monarch came,
Death to escape his highest aim:
His eye he on the prophet cast,
And said he hop'd the danger past.
The man of God, with stern replies,
The monarch's wish'd-for life denies;
In wrath he rises at the word,
And in his bosom plung'd his sword.
To his own Ramah Samuel went:
To Gibeah Saul, in discontent;

And growing care his mind engroſt,
To think he had his kingdom loſt.
His anxious heart with heavy gloom
Preſages all his woes to come:
By fits he rages all around,
Till muſic's ſoft perſuaſive ſound
Makes his tumultuous paſſions ceaſe,
And calms his mighty ſoul to peace.

Now Iſrael's bold Philiſtine foes,
Dreadful in arms againſt them roſe:
High on a hill their armies ſtand,
And the adjacent plains command;
While from a neighbouring mountain's height
The troops of Saul await the fight:
When down the hill, with daring pride,
A champion came, and ſoon defy'd
Their hoſt to bring a man that may
In ſingle combat end the fray.
This champion's vaſt enormous ſize
Fills Iſrael's armies with ſurprize:

Nor

Nor can they find a man of might
That dare with great Goliah fight.
Full forty days the inſulting chief
Fills all the trembling hoſt with grief,
Till a young ſhepherd from afar,
Coming by chance into the war,
By God inſpir'd, attempts the deed,
And makes the mighty giant bleed.
With a ſmall ſtone his brain he found,
And brought the monſter to the ground:
With his own ſword hew'd off his head;
To Saul he brought it while it bled.
The Philiſtines the combat ſee;
Their champion dead, at once they flee;
Which Iſrael's hoſt with gladneſs view,
Loud ſhout the armies, and purſue.
Young David was the ſhepherd's name,
From Bethlehem the hero came;
His deeds the maids and matrons ſing,
Which fills with rage the jealous king:

Who like the reſt applauds the deed,
But ſecretly his death decreed:
For when the monarch's madneſs came,
And David ſtrove to charm the ſame
With his ſoft lyre, in open view
The raging king his javelin threw
At his fair breaſt: The erring death,
Falſe to his aim, plung'd in the earth.
Then ſoon to end the hero's days,
The crafty king pretends to raiſe
The noble youth to high command,
And to beſtow his daughter's hand
In marriage; if he bravely will,
With his own hand, an hundred kill
Of Iſrael's bold Philiſtine foes.
The ardent youth undaunted goes,
Slays twice the number he deſir'd,
And brings the king the parts requir'd.
The envious monarch was afraid
Now to with-hold the royal maid:

But

But ſtill his boſom boils with ire,
And his unjuſt commands require
His ſon and ſervants, when they may,
By private means the youth to ſlay.
The generous prince abhors the deed,
Nor in ſuch baſeneſs will proceed:
But loves the man his father hates,
And his unjuſt deſigns relates.
Then near his father's throne he draws,
And pleads young David's righteous cauſe;
Nor ſeems to plead to Saul in vain,
Who ſwears the youth ſhall not be ſlain.
But ſtill with wrath his boſom burns,
And ſoon his raging fit returns:
David with muſic ſtrove to chear,
The king with fury threw his ſpear,
Which found the wall, and quiver'd there.
The youth perceiv'd the tyrant's view,
And now to ſave his life withdrew.

The impatient king, to gain his ends,
To David's houſe immediate ſends,
Whoſe wife well knows the ſtern decree,
And out of kindneſs bids him flee.
Saul ſeeks to kill him in his bed,
She plac'd an image in his ſtead.
Then Ramah's land the hero gains,
And to the man of God complains:
A while abiding with the ſeer,
The raging king purſu'd him there.
Three times he ſent a warlike band
To execute his fierce command:
When they approach'd the prophet's town,
They lay their bloody purpoſe down:
Alike with furious rapture burn,
Forget the buſineſs, and return.
The king himſelf, when here he came,
No longer ſeeks a monarch's fame;
He lays aſide his robes of ſtate,
And ſoon forgets his former hate:

On the cold ground he naked lies,
And, full of rapture, propheſys.
To Jonathan then David goes,
And tells the tale of all his woes.
Him with reſpect the prince receiv'd,
And at his father's rancour griev'd;
Propoſing with his might to try
The cruel king to pacify.
On the next day was held a feaſt:
The noble youth his ſire addreſt
In David's cauſe. The monarch roſe,
And at his ſon his javelin throws,
With foul reproach, and vengeful wrath,
Thinking to ſtrike him to the earth.
The prince, enrag'd, will not contend,
But goes to meet his noble friend:
In tender love a league they make,
And then a ſolemn farewell take.
The ſon of Jeſſe, to Nob repairs,
And ſpreads before the LORD his cares.

Him

Him the high prieſt in love receives,
The hallow'd bread to eat he gives;
And arms with great Goliah's ſword,
Which was laid up before the LORD.
But while they at the feaſt appear,
A ſurly Edomite came there,
A captain under Saul; who goes,
And to the king the kindneſs ſhews
Which David from the prieſt receiv'd.
At this the envious monarch griev'd,
And ſoon in riſing rage decreed
All the whole race of prieſts to bleed.
To kill them ſoon he gives command,
His troops of guards reluctant ſtand;
But the dire taſk was not refus'd
By Doeg, who the prieſt accus'd;
For when to him the orders came,
He ſtrictly executes the ſame:
The city he to ſlaughter gives,
And ruthleſs murders all that lives.

Then

Then fourſcore prieſts were join'd in death;
Promiſcuous on the blood-ſtain'd earth
Old men and young, and infants lie,
And maids, and wives, and matrons die.
Then to Adullam's ſpacious cave
Young David fled, his life to ſave:
Here by his kindred he was join'd;
And every diſcontented mind
That groans beneath the tyrant's chains,
With David now a refuge gains.
Leaving his friends and father dead,
The high prieſt's ſon for ſafety fled,
And to the hero he relates
His kindred and his city's fates.
Such an unjuſt and cruel deed
Makes the ſoft heart of David bleed;
And lamentations from him draws,
As they had ſuffer'd in his cauſe.
But Heaven's ſwift vengeance, on the wing,
Soon overtakes the impious king:

And while the mighty ſtroke forbears,
Confuſion ſeizes his affairs.
Still in his heart fell fury burns,
His growing rage of David turns;
And with an ever anxious mind
He ſeeks the man he cannot find.
Three thouſand choſen men he draws
To favour his unrighteous cauſe;
Theſe he to ſeek the youth conſtrains,
Over the rocks, the hills and plains,
In deſerts, dens, and gloomy caves;
But Iſrael's God his choſen ſaves.
Twice was, in ſolitary hour,
The monarch's life in David's power;
When to a ſilent cave retir'd
The hero, by his God inſpir'd,
Once ſeiz'd his robe, and once his ſpear,
But from his blood his hands were clear.
The king, abaſh'd, his guilt confeſt,
And ſware to give the hero reſt:

But

But ſoon with growing rage he burn'd,
And to the hot purſuit return'd;
Till, to eſcape his vengeful hand,
He forc'd the youth to quit the land.

But now a great event draws nigh,
Which finds the monarch freſh employ.
The Philiſtines againſt him join,
On Shunem's plains their armies ſhine;
While Iſrael their encampment form
On Gilboah's hills, and wait the ſtorm.
But with amazement and diſmay
The monarch's heart deſerts the day:
It ſinks within him, and he found
Himſelf with terrors compaſs'd round.
To his inſulted GOD he cries,
But not one word the GOD replies,
Dead was the much-lamented ſeer,
And no relief expected there.
The monarch in the laſt diſtreſs,
Whom Iſrael's GOD forbids to bleſs,

Proceeds to take the means he hates,
And ſeeks to hell to ſearch the fates.
Late had the king, by heaven's command,
Of necromancers rid the land,
And ſent the wizard train to dwell
With their own fiends, in native hell.
But now, his dark deſigns to gain,
He aſks if any witch remain:
The ſervants ſoon inform their lord,
At Endor dwells a hag abhorr'd.
The king diſguis'd to Endor went,
And ſoon explain'd his dark intent;
While conſcious night, with gloom unknown,
In double darkneſs held her throne.
The woman from the ſuit withdraws,
Becauſe contrary to the laws:
Yet, urg'd and ſooth'd, conſents to bring
Deceaſed Samuel to the king.
Then with her art to work ſhe goes,
And uncouth myſtic figures ſhews;

Mutters

Mutters ſtrange charms, ſets every ſpell,
The ſport of fiends, the trade of hell.
But while her demons ſtrove to frame
Illuſive ſhapes, the prophet came,
By heaven commiſſion'd to relate
The monarch's near approaching fate.
In his own form appear'd the ſeer,
Which fill'd the conſcious hag with fear:
With all her might aloud ſhe cries,
For Gods inſtead of demons riſe,
Then Saul ſhe knows, and hears enquire,
Say in what form you ſee the ſire?—
She cries, He's in his mantle come;
But, huſh, he ſpeaks! let all be dumb!—
The trembling king, in ſolemn ſtrain
Firſt hears the awful ſeer complain,
And aſk what madneſs had him led
Thus to diſturb the peaceful dead.
The king replies, My deep diſtreſs
At this dire juncture, claims no leſs;

The Philiſtines prepare for fight,
And God departed from my ſight:
Neither by prophets, or by dreams,
Jehovah now his will proclaims:
I grope in darkneſs! nor can ſee
One gleam of comfort, but from thee.—
The prophet frowns, with this reply,
And can you think indeed, that I
Will undertake your wretched cauſe,
When the Eternal God withdraws?
For know, O prince, theſe evils all
By God's direction on thee fall:
And in his ſight abhorr'd you ſtand,
For violating his command,
When haughty Amalek you ſpar'd.
And, as I at the time declar'd,
The ſceptre from your hand he'll take,
And David your ſucceſſor make.
The time is come; thy hour is nigh!
From the fierce foe will Iſrael fly.

To-morrow

To-morrow thy brave ſons and thee,
All join'd in death, ſhall be with me!—
With growing horror, and with fear,
The monarch ſhook, his fate to hear:
No longer he ſupports his care,
But gives himſelf to ſad deſpair;
In anguiſh on the ground he lies,
And ſeems determin'd not to riſe.
But ſoon the hag prepar'd a treat,
And urg'd the gloomy king to eat;
Each ſervant like petition makes,
And ſome refreſhment then he takes;
When ruminating on his woes,
Back to the camp by night he goes.
When ſacred light adorns the ſkies,
The Philiſtines from Aphek riſe;
Advancing bold to Gilboa's height,
They with the morn begin the fight;
With ſtones and arrows gall the foe,
And pour with fury from below.

Hot burns the war, and 'tis decreed
That Iſrael's mightieſt men ſhall bleed.
Three valiant ſons that bleſs'd Saul's reign,
By the victorious foe are ſlain;
Nor can the king the war ſuſtain:
But while to heaven he lifts his eyes
The arrows wound him as he flies.
With arrows ſticking in his ſide,
He to his armour-bearer cry'd,
Young man, undaunted draw thy ſword,
Free from loath life thy hapleſs lord!
Why ſhould I longer live to know
The fury of the inſulting foe?—
The youth declin'd the dreadful deed;
Nor durſt he make the monarch bleed.
Then his own ſword the old king found,
He ſet it upright on the ground;
And falling on it undiſmay'd,
Thruſt thro' his heart the beamy blade.

Then

Then Iſrael left their monarch dead,
And all in dire confuſion fled:
When ſoon the conquering armies take
The various cities they forſake.

Next day they crowd the hoſtile plain,
And with rejoicing ſtrip the ſlain:
When ſoon they find with glad ſurprize
The royal body where it lies.
The monarch's three dead ſons they found,
And with loud ſhouts they ſhook the ground:
Then meanly they inſult the dead,
With ſport cut off the monarch's head;
Which ſoon to Dagon's temple ſent
Proclaims abroad the great event.
Then ſtrip the royal bodies all,
And impious nail them to a wall.
The valiant men of Jabeſh hear,
They march by night, and find them there:
The bodies from the wall they gain'd,
And buried in their native land.

HISTORY THE SECOND.

David anointed King by Samuel; and his Combat with Goliah.

Samuel, ch. xvi. xvii.

THE ſon of Jeſſe, by Saul conſtrain'd
To leave his people and his land,
To Achiſh, king of Gath, retir'd:
His noble mind the prince admir'd;
And from the raging king to ſave,
A city he to David gave;
Ziklag its name; and here abode
The chief, depending on his God.
When Saul on Gilboa's hills was ſlain,
And clos'd in death his hapleſs reign,
The two ſucceeding days refuſe
The hero the important news:
The third a youth to Ziklag came,
The mournful tidings to proclaim;

And

Engrav'd for Fellowes Hist. of the Bible.

David killing Goliah.

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And he, expecting a reward,
Pronounces that himself had dar'd
To kill the king: And makes it known
That Israel's host was overthrown;
Great numbers slain; the warriors fled;
And Jonathan amongst the dead.
The news with horror fill'd the chief,
And to the agonies of grief
The noble youth at first gave way,
And fasted till the close of day.
Then the young man who brought the news
With fierce resentment he pursues:
Since with Saul's blood his impious hand
Was, by his own confession, stain'd
For this he dies. With grief inspir'd
The mournful son of Jesse retir'd,
And to his tuneful lyre proceeds
To sing the hapless heroes deeds;
When in a soul-affecting strain
He praises and laments the slain.

The noble youth by heaven belov'd,
To diſtant Hebron then remov'd:
Such was JEHOVAH's high command.
And ſoon the ardent love he gain'd
Of his own tribe; who all appear,
And crown the pious hero there.
David the kingly rule to gain
Was deſtin'd in the former reign:
For when, contrary to the word
Of Samuel, and of the LORD,
Victorious Saul preſum'd to bring
The cattle and the captive king
Of Amalek, to Gilgal's plain,
The prophet then declar'd his reign
Would ſhortly end. Good Samuel griev'd;
But by the inſpiring GOD reliev'd,
To Bethlehem approach'd the ſeer,
And Jeſſe's ſon anointed there.
To ſacrifice, the plains he trod,
Such were the orders of the GOD.

Eight ſons were good old Jeſſe's claim:
Seven to the feaſt with Samuel came;
The youngeſt on the mountain ſide
Attends his father's fleecy pride;
David his name, and he's the man:
A meſſenger to fetch him ran.
A lovely youth, to fame unknown,
Freſh as the morning roſe he ſhone:
But when the holy oil was ſhed
By the great prophet on his head,
It fills his ſoul with fire, and breeds
A growing love to martial deeds.
But he with bleating flocks remain'd,
Till ſoon call'd out to ſave the land.

Now Iſrael's bold Philiſtine foes
Dreadful in arms againſt them roſe,
And on Azekah's ſtately height
Their numerous hoſt prepares for fight.
The troops of Saul, with watchful care,
From neighbouring heights await the war,

With reſolution in their eyes;
Between the hoſts a valley lies:
When from the hill, with martial frown,
A giant warrior marches down,
Who look'd around with ſcornful pride,
And Iſrael and their hoſt defy'd.
The Iſraelites upon him gaze,
And ſee his dreadful helmet blaze;
Bright ſhone in brazen armour dreſt
His mighty limbs, and giant cheſt:
Vaſt was his ſpear, and bright his ſhield;
He like a tower o'erlook'd the field;
Earth ſhook beneath him as he trod;
He marches dreadful as a GOD:
When ſoon his voice like thunder broke,
And proudly vaunting thus he ſpoke:
Where are your hearts, ye men of Saul!
What abject ſouls poſſeſs you all!
Is martial glory your delight,
And not a man that dares to fight!

If one in all your hoſt there be,
Let him advance, and fight with me:
And if his bold attempt ſucceed,
And by your champion's arm I bleed,
Then ends the war; and all our land
Shall be reſign'd to your command:
But if the God of war ordain
That by my hand your chief be ſlain,
Then, as by reaſon's law 'tis fit,
All Iſrael ſhall to us ſubmit:
By me your armies ſtand defy'd,
Then bring your man, and be it try'd!—
With vaſt amazement and diſmay,
Iſrael's bold ſons the chief ſurvey;
His vaſt broad ſword they view with fear,
And dread the lightning of his ſpear,
Whoſe point, oft ſhaking in the ſun,
With broad reflection on them ſhone.
They ſtand aſtoniſh'd at his might,
And every heart declines the fight.

The vaunting chief full forty days
His giant bulk in view diſplays,
Still more inſulting grows, and proud;
He threatens and he ſtorms aloud;
Thick ſmoke from his wide noſtrils flows,
And, as in all his pride he goes,
His eyes appear like fury flames;
And Iſrael's God his tongue blaſphemes.

Three ſons, good Jeſſe's eldeſt care,
Follow'd their monarch to the war;
But David with his flocks remain'd:
At length his ſire's conſent he gain'd
To ſee his brethren. With this aim,
Soon to the camp the ſhepherd came.
As with his brethren ſtands the boy,
The vaſt enormous chief drew nigh;
Goliah was his name; his place
Was Gath; of Anak was his race.
He, ſwell'd with ſcorn and daring pride,
All Iſrael and her hoſt defy'd;

In

In impious ſtrain his language ran,
And much he urg'd to bring a man:
When trembling at each word he ſaid,
The Iſraelites before him fled;
With growing anguiſh look'd around,
And ſcarce an army ſtands the ground.
The ſhepherd heard, and at each word
His ardent ſpirit ſought the LORD:
And while his GOD the youth addreſt,
Uncommon ardor heav'd his breaſt,
Which warms his youthful heart, and breeds
A ſtrong deſire to martial deeds.
He feels ſome ſpirit heave each limb,
And thinks the fight reſerv'd for him.
Then while his ſoul with anger burn'd,
To the diſhearten'd troops he turn'd:
What grief, what ſhame to hear, he cry'd,
All Iſrael's armies thus defy'd
By a foul monſter! But declare
What Iſrael's king's propoſals are;

And what rewards he will beſtow
On him that lays the boaſter low,
Who ſhall the enormous giant ſlay,
And take our land's reproach away?
Who is this Philiſtine! and why
Should he the hoſt of GOD defy!—
The man who thus ſhall ſave the land,
The king will raiſe to high command,
And give his daughter for a bride;
But who ſhall dare! the troops reply'd.—
While the young ſhepherd thus enquir'd,
His brother was with rage inſpir'd:
Eliab cry'd, Why ſtay'ſt thou here,
To make thy fooliſh pride appear?
Let not the hoſt thy youth deſpiſe;
Is war become the trade of boys!
Back to thy ſheep return again,
Bold youth! and leave the fight to men!—
David with this reply withdraws:
What have I done! is there not cauſe!—

Then

Then to another man he turn'd,
For ſtill with noble fire he burn'd:
Of the reward he aſks once more,
And finds the anſwer as before.
The crowding hoſt admiring find
Such ſpirit, and ſo great a mind,
On one whoſe youth and dreſs proclaim
Freſh to the field, unknown to fame:
When wondering at his words they bring
The blooming boy before the king.
Let no man dread, the youth began,
This haughty monſter of a man,
That dare all Iſrael's hoſt defy!
His time is come, his end is nigh:
And, truſting in JEHOVAH's might,
Myſelf will undertake the fight.—
With ſorrow Saul the youth ſurvey'd,
And would from the attempt diſſuade:
Thou haſt not ſtrength, the monarch cries,
Againſt this man of war to riſe!

Unus'd to arms, unknown in war,
Thy bleating flocks have been thy care;
But he in camps his life hath led,
To all the toils of battle bred:
Befides his ſtrength!—The youth rejoins,
JEHOVAH's power the brighter ſhines
When great deſigns his ſpirit breeds,
And infants dare immortal deeds.
The track of war I ne'er have trod,
But ſtill have felt the inſpiring GOD:
For when I watch'd my fleecy care,
I ſlew a lion and a bear
Which my defenceleſs fold invade,
And in the duſt the monſters laid.
'Twas Iſrael's GOD that deign'd to bleſs
My youthful arm with ſuch ſucceſs:
Like one of theſe the wretch ſhall bleed,
And wondering armies mark the deed.—
The monarch hears with glad ſurprize,
And to the youth in rapture cries,

Then

Then go to meet him, void of fear,
And may thy GOD indeed be there!—
For the fierce combat to prepare,
The monarch then with tender care
In ſhining arms the youth array'd.
With theſe to go the boy aſſay'd;
But the long lance and ſhining ſhield
The ſhepherd knew not how to wield;
And the ſtiff armour on each limb
Was aukward, and unknown to him.
But ſtill reſolv'd the fight to try,
With ſpeed he lays the armour by.
Inſtead of arms, with care he took
His ſling, his ſhepherd's bag and crook,
And to a neighbouring ſtream he goes,
When five ſmooth ſtones from thence he choſe;
And chearful, in his own array,
He marches to diſpute the day.

Between the armies, full in ſight,
Contemptuous, vaunting in his might,
Dreadful his creſt, his armour bright,
The champion came; and to oppoſe
His giant foe, the ſhepherd goes.
With riſing rage the monſter ſaw
The blooming boy towards him draw;
When, with a frown, Ye gods, he cry'd,
And am I by a youth defy'd!
Am I a dog! and is it thought
That with a ſtaff I may be fought,
Like ſome dull clown be forc'd to yield,
Chaſtiz'd and beaten from the field!
By Beelzebub, and Dagon too,
Curſt be the wretch who hopes to view
Such foul diſhonour! But, my boy,
Purſue your plan: Approach, and try
The force of this right hand! This ſpear
Perhaps may tell you what is fear!

Dare

Dare to approach, thou wretch accurſt!
And I will blow thee up like duſt;
Scatter thy mangled limbs around,
And leave them bleeding on the ground;
Expos'd by day, and midnight hour,
For dogs and vultures to devour!—
Thus while he ſpake, the champion grew
More grim and horrible to view;
When the bold youth, with careful eyes,
Beholds his form, and thus replies:
Not all theſe idle threats I fear,
Or tremble at your ſword or ſpear;
Nor ſhall the blazing of your ſhield
Diſmay, or fright me from the field:
On theſe your impious truſt relies,
But all your weapons I deſpiſe!
And meet you in JEHOVAH's name.
Now try the GOD which you blaſpheme!
His armies you have oft defy'd;
He ſurely will chaſtize your pride,

And

And by mine hand direct the wound,
Which ſoon will bring you to the ground:
From thy huge cheſt I'll take thy head;
The eagles ſhall with thee be fed;
And hungry wolves ſhall tear away
Thy ſinews for their nightly prey;
When all the world ſhall underſtand
That there's a GOD in Iſrael's land.—
Foaming with rage the monſter came,
He whirl'd his faulchion like a flame,
And ſhook his ſpear, with thought to throw
The javelin at his ſhepherd foe.
But the bold youth, with ſteady look,
A lucky ſtone directly took;
This from his ſling immediate flies,
And whizzing ſings along the ſkies:
JEHOVAH's power directs its courſe,
And drives it with reſiſtleſs force:
Thro' the bright helmet drove the ſtone,
It rent the ſkin, and crush'd the bone

Of

Of the broad forehead of the foe,
And laid the mighty champion low.
The giant falls, a ſudden night
Clos'd on his ſenſes and his ſight:
His armour rings againſt the ground,
And ſhakes the wondering vale around.
Then, eager in his country's cauſe,
The youth advances, and he draws
With all his might the champion's ſword,
And turns its edge againſt its lord:
From his huge trunk hews off his head:
The Philiſtines beheld, and fled.

HISTORY THE THIRD.

David and Abigail.

1 *Samuel*, ch. xxv.—1 *Chron.* ch. xii.

THE youth who thus had ſav'd the land
Was by the jealous king conſtrain'd
To wander, tho' he had ſubdu'd;
And was with ceaſeleſs rage purſu'd:
But leſt the monarch's ruthleſs hate
Should urge good David's parents' fate,
The pious youth, with tender care,
To Moab took the ancient pair:
His family, with all his friends,
Upon his wandering ſteps attends;
And ſhun the angry tyrant's face,
Leſt vengeance fall on all the race.
Soon likewiſe to the hero came
Men of vaſt ſtrenghth, and matchleſs fame,

Who

Who with each hand their weapons wield,
The pride and terror of the field!
With certain aim huge ſtones they throw,
Or with their arrows gall the foe.
From Benjamin theſe heroes ſpring,
The valiant brethren of the king.
With theſe the martial Gadites join'd,
Of manly ſtrength and noble mind;
Train'd up to war, and fit to wield
The beamy lance, and blazing ſhield;
As the grim lion, void of fear,
And ſwift of foot as mountain deer.
Where flowery Carmel's verdant ſide
Vaſt flocks of goats and ſheep ſupply'd,
Rich Nabal dwelt; of Caleb's race;
And held poſſeſſions in the place:
But not to generous deeds inclin'd,
Gloomy and churliſh was his mind.
But courteous, affable and mild,
Fair Abigail ſerenely ſmil'd:

She, his fair ſpouſe, reliev'd his cares,
And wiſely manag'd his affairs.

Now ſummer reign'd in higheſt prime,
And ſoon brought on the chearful time
When the white flocks their fleeces yield,
And fill with joy the bleating field.
Rich Nabal's ſervants ſhear'd his train;
And to reward the ſweating ſwain,
Each evening, when their labour ceas'd,
The chief prepar'd a princely feaſt.
David, and who his wandering ſhar'd,
In deſerts dwelt, and hardly far'd.
Of Nabal's noble fare he hears,
And from his camp a band appears,
Who with ſubmiſſion urge their prayer,
Some portion of his feaſt to ſhare:
For while in Maon's wilds they ſtay'd
No robbers durſt his fold invade;
No loſs his flocks ſuſtain'd; and there
His ſhepherds watch'd them, void of fear.

The

The churliſh chief, with rough replies
And taunts, their ſmall requeſt denies;
And empty ſends the youths away;
Who tell their lord. Without delay
David girds on his ſword, and then
He marches with four hundred men,
Who with their lord to vengeance riſe,
And all the houſe of Nabal dies.
Such was their thought: When to prevent
The offended warriors raſh intent,
Laden with princely preſents came
To meet the chief, the prudent dame,
The ſottiſh churl's diſcreeter ſpouſe;
Who all his conduct diſallows.
She heard not the petition made,
Nor what her lord in anſwer ſaid:
But by a ſervant told, will try
The hero's wrath to pacify.
Her preſents and her wiſe addreſs
Were ſoon attended with ſucceſs:

The joyful chief her gifts receives;
He kindly the affront forgives:
And thankful in his heart he ſtood,
That GOD had kept his ſword from blood.
Then her own houſe the dame regains,
Where drunken ſong with riot reigns;
But prudent ſhe with-holds the tale
While liquor and its fumes prevail;
But when ſhe ſees the morning ſhine,
And wake her huſband from his wine,
She to her wondering lord relates
What yeſterday had been their fates,
If not prevented. Like a ſtone
Sunk his dead heart, with fear unknown:
Ten days he languiſh'd, then he dy'd;
And David made the dame his bride.

HISTORY THE FOURTH.

David surprizes the Amalekites, who in his Absence plundered and burned his City; and recovers the Captives and Spoil.

1 *Samuel*, ch. xxx.

WHEN Saul with hatred unrestrain'd
Had drove good David from the land,
The pious chief, belov'd of GOD,
At Ziklag sixteen months abode;
And here the chief subsistence gains
By plundering the neighbouring plains:
When urg'd by Achish to delare
Against what people turn'd his war,
He to the monarch made his boast
That he invaded Israel's coast.
And now against the men of Saul
The Philistines their armies call;

When

When under Achiſh David goes,
And marches with his country's foes.
Not long the chief the war purſues;
The Philiſtines his aid refuſe;
And when the third bright morning roſe,
To his own town the hero goes.
But when to Ziklag he return'd,
With grief he found his city burn'd:
For Amalek's revengeful race
Had fallen on the defenceleſs place.
The perſons they forbear to ſlay,
But took whate'er they found away,
Subjected to their captive chains,
Nor wife, nor infant now remains.
David's ſmall army with ſurprize
Behold the ſmoaking ruins riſe,
And in the tranſports of their grief
Had half reſolv'd to ſtone the chief:
But taking courage in his God,
Not long unactive he abode;

But out his little army draws,
And marches to avenge his cauſe.
Soon the victorious troops he found
Spread in diſorder o'er the ground:
In noiſy mirth, and drunken ſong,
The thoughtleſs train the feaſt prolong:
But when cool evening clos'd the day,
The hero ſmote them as they lay:
By his ſharp ſword the army bleeds,
And then to plunder he proceeds.
Whate'er his men had loſt was gain'd,
And a vaſt booty they detain'd:
To every man they part aſſign'd,
Whether they fought or ſtay'd behind;
And with their wives, and all their train,
They their own town with joy regain.
Part of the plunder David ſends
To all the cities of his friends;
And long as Saul o'er Iſrael reign'd,
At Ziklag with his men remain'd.

HISTORY THE FIFTH.

The Reign of Iſhboſheth, and Death of Abner.

2 *Samuel*, ch. ii. iii.

WHEN Saul on Gilboah's hills was ſlain,
Weak Iſhboſheth aſſum'd the reign;
Rais'd by great Abner to the throne,
Where he with fading luſtre ſhone.
Acroſs great Jordan's noted ſtream
The prince, led by the warrior, came;
In Gilead fix'd his regal ſeat,
And Iſrael's tribes upon him wait;
While at great Hebron David ſtay'd,
And Judah's men his laws obey'd.
Tho' Jordan roll'd between the kings,
Bold Abner ſoon to battle brings
The hoſt of Iſrael 'croſs the ſtream;
And ſoon to Gibeon's pool they came:

When

When valiant Joab boldly goes
With David's men to meet their foes.
Ere they begin the work of fate,
Beſide the ſtream both armies ſate;
When Abner ſoon was heard to ſay,
Let the young men ariſe and play.—
To which brave Joab thus replies,
My men are ready, let them riſe!—
Then, ere the bloody battle join'd,
Twelve on each ſide, with valiant mind,
Between the mighty armies ran,
And with their ſwords the fight began;
Each ſtabb'd his bold oppoſer's ſide,
And all the four-and-twenty dy'd.
The armies join, the battle bleeds,
Joab perform'd immortal deeds:
Vaſt numbers ſpread the fatal field,
At length the troops of Abner yield,
By David's ſervants put to flight,
And ſlaughter reigns till edge of night;

When Joab, by the trumpet's breath,
Stops the deſtructive trade of death.
With him two noble brothers ſhare
The honours and the toils of war.
The youngeſt was Aſahel nam'd,
For the ſwift race thro' Iſrael fam'd;
And when the hot purſuit began,
Cloſe at great Abner's heels he ran:
The chief the youth with anger view'd,
Enrag'd to ſee himſelf purſu'd;
And bids retreat; but bids in vain;
When by his ſpear the youth was ſlain.
Long burns the war between the kings;
But victory her laurels brings
To David's men; and diſcord roſe,
Which ſoon prov'd fatal to his foes.
In the laſt reign, fair Rizpah's charms
Had brought the monarch to her arms.
The monarch dead, the blooming fair
Succeeded to the general's care.

The king in anger this diſdain'd,
And thought his father's bed profan'd:
His ſharp rebukes great Abner hears,
Neither his threats or power he fears;
But makes his hot reſentment known,
And vows to pull him from his throne.
He moves the tribes in David's cauſe,
And then to Hebron ſoon withdraws,
Propoſing now without delay
To make them ſubject to his ſway.
With twenty men the hero came,
And to the king declar'd the ſame.
David receives his noble gueſt,
And for his men prepar'd a feaſt:
Then ere the evening clos'd the day,
He ſent the train in peace away.
Joab juſt then from war return'd,
And ſtill his heart with rancour burn'd:
Abner could ne'er his favour gain,
Becauſe he had his brother ſlain.

For the departed chief he ſends;
They meet, and they ſalute as friends:
Joab took care his wrath to hide,
But plung'd his dagger in his ſide.
Vaſt floods of tears good David ſhed,
And much he mourn'd for Abner dead.
A noble funeral then he gave,
He follow'd to the hero's grave;
And, while the corps before him lies,
Invokes the vengeance of the ſkies
On his baſe murderer, and his ſeed,
And Iſrael's tribes lament the deed.

Soon over Jordan's ſwelling ſtream
To Iſhboſheth the tidings came
That Abner was at Hebron ſlain;
And ſtill more feeble grows his reign:
The murmuring tribes againſt him riſe,
And his weak government deſpiſe;
Till two vile captains of his guard,
In hopes to gain a great reward,

At

At noon approach'd the monarch's bed,
First ſtabb'd, and then cut off his head.

HISTORY THE SIXTH.

David made King over all Iſrael: He conquers Jeruſalem; fetches the Ark; ſubdues ſeveral Nations; and ſhews Kindneſs to Mephiboſheth.

2 *Samuel*, ch. v. *to* ix.—1 *Chron.* xi. *to* xviii.

THE villains that had ſlain the king
Their maſters head to Hebron bring;
And that a due reward they gain,
David commands them to be ſlain.
Then Iſrael's tribes to Hebron came,
And with united joy proclaim
David their king. The monarch roſe,
And to Jeruſalem * he goes.

The

* The city of Jeruſalem after this time became the metropolis of the Iſraelitiſh nation; and the ſcene of the

The Jebuſites his troops defeat,
And there he fix'd his regal ſeat:
On Zion's mountain rear'd his throne,
And with increaſing glory ſhone.
Then careful to his own abode,
The monarch fetch'd the ark of GOD,
With lofty muſic's ſolemn ſound,
And a vaſt train of nobles round,
With ſhouts of joy, and dance and ſong,
The ſacred ſymbols march along;
And thirty thouſand men appear
In long proceſſion on the rear.
To a rich tent proceeds the train,
And there they let the ark remain:
To ſacrifice they then proceed;
Beneath the ſtroke the victims bleed;
Laden with gifts the altars flame;
And feaſts the general joy proclaim.

The

the moſt remarkable events which will hereafter be recorded in the ſacred hiſtory.

The haughty queen with ſcornful eye
Beholds the monarch ſhare the joy,
Who hears reproaches from the dame.
When late he to the palace came,
This princeſs, rich in maiden charms,
Was given to the hero's arms:
His early valour claim'd her bed;
But when he from her father fled,
The jealous king the fair conſtrain'd
To Phaltiel to give her hand;
But after gloomy Saul was ſlain,
In Iſhboſheth's declining reign
To him the hero ſoon apply'd,
And boldly now demands his bride.
Not in condition to diſpute,
The feeble monarch grants the ſuit;
And tho' the whining huſband mourn'd,
She to her hero ſoon return'd:
But for her preſent ſcornful pride
All future iſſue is deny'd.

Then

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Then

Then the brave prince, with pious mind,
To build an houſe for GOD deſign'd.
Beneath a cedar roof, he cries,
I lodge, while Iſrael's glory lies
Shaded with curtains. But I riſe,
And will for GOD an houſe prepare,
And fix his ark and worſhip there.—
GOD to the chief his will makes known,
That he will ſurely build his throne,
Bleſs and ſucceed him all his days;
But not permits an houſe to raiſe,
Becauſe in war ſupreme he ſtood,
And oft his hands were ſtain'd with blood.
But his own ſon, who ſhall ſucceed,
Who is to future fame decreed,
And ſhall by heaven's indulgence gain
A peaceful and a proſperous reign,
A noble edifice ſhall rear,
And fix JEHOVAH's dwelling there.

The

The pious king the caſe ſurveys
With holy gratitude and praiſe:
To God ſubmits; and bids fulfil
The ſovereign dictates of his will:
Then with heroic zeal prepares
To carry on his future wars.
His mighty armies muſter'd ſtand,
Awaiting the ſupreme command;
And noble chiefs renown'd for might
Stand in long ranks arrang'd for fight.
Adnio firſt, a mighty name,
High in command, in might ſupreme;
Whoſe potent ſpear like lightning flew,
And full eight hundred warriors ſlew
Before he ceas'd. And next him roſe,
Mighty to cruſh his country's foes,
Great Eliazar, fam'd from far,
Able himſelf to turn the war.
The Philiſtines the land o'erſpread,
And Iſrael's fearful hoſt was fled:

He ſtood the ſhock without diſmay,
And turn'd the fortune of the day:
His ſingle arm can hoſts ſubdue,
The reſt return but to purſue.
Next mighty Shammah roſe to fame,
And could the wars firſt honours claim;
For when, by furious outrage born,
The Philiſtines deſtroy'd the corn,
With his long lance and dreadful ſhield
He drove their armies from the field;
When Iſrael's troops, who late had fled,
Return, and wondering view the dead.
  Theſe were the prime: The next in might,
With terror arm'd, and ſtrong for fight,
Was bold Abiſhai, whoſe ſpear
Fill'd each ſtout warrior's heart with fear;
Its ſteely point three hundred found,
And laid them breathleſs on the ground.
Great Benaiah next aſpires,
Whoſe ſoul was full of martial fires;

Bold

Bold as the lion which he ſlew:
His proweſs was excell'd by few:
He with a ſtaff preſum'd to go
Againſt a ſtrong Egyptian foe
Compleatly arm'd; and, void of fear,
He ſlew the chief with his own ſpear.
Nor theſe alone; but a vaſt train
Stand forth conſpicuous on the plain;
Men of vaſt ſtrength, and matchleſs fame,
Who war's firſt honours juſtly claim.
They rag'd like lightning thro' the field,
Mow'd down whole troops, made armies yield;
And ſtriving high repute to gain,
Had three enormous giants ſlain.
Goliah, David flew before;
And Anak's race was now no more.
With pleaſure ſparkling in his eyes,
The king beholds his warriors riſe,
Rewards each chief with liberal hand,
And gives freſh honours and command.

Then on the Philiſtines he turns,
And all the rage of battle burns;
For when at Hebron it was known
The tribes had rais'd him to the throne,
In arms at Salem they appear,
And twice their hoſt was ſmitten there.
And now before his arms they fall,
Diſmay and terror ſeize them all:
All thoughts of conqueſt they give o'er,
And hence diſturb his peace no more.

The land of Moab next muſt feel
The force of his avenging ſteel;
Alike in duſt his conquering ſword
Lays the low vaſſal and the lord;
On each ſtrong town his army falls,
Throws down the ramparts and the walls;
Death by his frown the monarch gives,
And only whom he favours lives.

Then to Euphrates' roaring ſtream,
Dreadful in arms the conqueror came:

Great

Great Hadadezer hears from far,
And brings his forces to the war;
His thundering cars and foaming ſteeds,
Rang'd in long ranks for horrid deeds,
The hero meets without diſmay,
And ſoon the mighty hoſt gave way.
Where-e'er great David's arms proceed,
The battle burns, the mighty bleed:
While by his ſword an army dies,
A thouſand chariots are his prize.

Then from ſmooth Pharpar's ſilent ſtream
The Syrian troops in order came;
For fair Damaſcus ſuccour ſends
To her vex'd brethren and her friends:
But ſoon it was the fate of all
By one victorious hoſt to fall:
Full twenty thouſand warriors ſlain,
Promiſcuous ſpread the groaning plain:
Their various cities, and their land,
To David now ſubjected ſtand.

The ſons of Edom next appear
To ſtop the hero's bold career
In the Salt Vale, and periſh there.
In duſt full eighteen thouſand lay,
And with their lives their folly pay.

The rage of war no longer burns;
To his own towers the king returns,
Where full on his revolving thought
Great friendſhip's ſacred laws are brought;
And he enquires thro' Judah's plains,
If ſeed to Jonathan remains.

One ſon there happen'd to ſurvive,
Whoſe nurſe's care had kept alive,
And, in kind friendſhip to her lord,
Sav'd from the mad devouring ſword:
But, ere a ſafe retreat ſhe gain'd,
A luckleſs fall the ankles ſtrain'd
Of the young prince; who hence became
Short in his ſtature, weak and lame.

For

For him the careful monarch ſends,
And places him among his friends;
Supplies his wants, and from the throne
With kindeſt beams upon him ſhone.

HISTORY THE SEVENTH.

The Seduction of Bathſheba; and Death of Uriah.

2 *Sam.* ch. xi. xii.

THE king at Zion now remains;
While far as Rabbah's diſtant plains
His valiant men of war ſit down,
And all around inveſt the town.
From their young king's imprudent deeds
The preſent waſteful war proceeds;
For when he firſt aſſum'd the throne,
David, to make his kindneſs known,
An offer of his friendſhip makes,
Which a choice band of warriors takes.

The

The prince, pretending to be wiſe,
Looks on the friendly train as ſpies:
And treated with contempt and ſcorn,
The warriors to their king return.

The affronted king, t' avenge his cauſe,
With ſpeed his conquering forces draws.
The nation with their ſtout allies
From his victorious army flies,
And to his mercy leaves the plains,
The capital alone remains;
And this, by Joab cloſely preſt,
Is ſoon to follow all the reſt.
The monarch, while his armies roam,
Enjoys the ſweets of peace at home;
Till paſſion, headlong, lawleſs, blind,
Roſe, and diſturb'd his tranquil mind.

'Twas evening mild: The ſetting ſun
Acroſs the landſcape faintly ſhone;
While eaſtern hills, and woods and ſtreams,
With oblique glance reflect his beams.

The

The king, from his own turret's height,
With tranſport long enjoy'd the ſight;
And firſt far off he caſt his eyes
Where Judah's miſty mountains riſe:
Till ſoon returning to purſue
Where nearer objects riſe to view,
He from his lofty ſtand looks down
On the fair garden's and the town.
Beneath a ſhade of lofty trees,
Which quiver'd with the evening breeze,
A moſſy fountain bubbling roſe,
And chryſtal ſtreams in plenty throws
Thro' a large garden. There diſplay'd
By fits, appearing thro' the ſhade,
A female form, ſupremely fair,
Fill'd the good monarch's heart with care.
On the green bank a while ſhe ſtood,
Then naked plung'd into the flood.

The prince's heart was all on flame,
And, panting to poſſeſs the dame,
He ſent his guards to aſk her name.
The information ſoon he gain'd,
And knew his love ſhould be reſtrain'd;
For this young beauty was the wife
Of a brave ſoldier, one whoſe life
Was now expos'd in Iſrael's wars;
Who leaving his domeſtic cares
To his young bride, his ſword he draws
Succeſsful in his monarch's cauſe.
The king, regardleſs of the laws
Of God or man, purſu'd his flame;
And to his wiſh the beauty came.
He, cautious of reproach, with care,
Ere break of day, diſmiſt the fair;
Whoſe pregnancy in little time
Recall'd the memory of her crime;
When in diſtreſs ſhe to the throne
Her ſituation ſoon makes known.

The monarch ponders on the caſe,
And, to avoid the dire diſgrace,
Soon to the camp a meſſage ſped,
To fetch her huſband to her bed.
At his command Uriah came;
But keeps at diſtance from the dame.
In camps and open fields, he cries,
Each friend and fellow-ſoldier lies;
And till our lines the town forſake,
No reſt or pleaſure will I take.—
His monarch, and his beauteous bride
In this petition ſtand deny'd.
Once more the king his ſoldier tries,
And at a feaſt with wine he plies;
Yet no wife's bed Uriah ſhar'd,
But ſlept all night amongſt the guard.
To make ſure work, and gain his ends,
The monarch then to Joab ſends
Such orders as his will explain,
That bold Uriah muſt be ſlain;

And by his ſovereign 'tis decreed
That he by Ammon's ſword ſhall bleed:
Himſelf the bloody mandate bears,
And to the camp with ſpeed repairs.
The general not enquires the cauſe,
But to the town his army draws;
And brave Uriah found his fate
Where Ammon ſallied from the gate.
Then Joab ſends the king the news;
And as before the war purſues.
Thus of his darling wiſh poſſeſt,
The monarch ſet his heart at reſt:
Nine proſperous months ſucceſſive ſmil'd,
And Bathſheba brought forth her child;
When great JEHOVAH from his throne,
To make his juſt diſpleaſure known,
His prophet ſent. The holy ſeer,
To make the monarch's crime appear,
In parabolic ſtile diſplay'd
A wealthy lord, who ſeizure made

On

On a poor peaſant's only lamb,
To treat a gueſt that to him came:
The lord had thouſands in his ſtore,
The poor man's one was now no more.
The king, enrag'd at ſuch a deed,
The cruel rich man's death decreed.
In bolder ſtrain the ſeer began,
And told the king, Thou art the Man!
Thus ſaith the LORD; I firſt thee choſe
When following the lambs and ewes,
On the bleak mountain's ſhaggy ſide;
And have thy utmoſt wiſh ſupply'd:
From Saul's fierce rage I ſet thee free,
And gave thy maſter's wives to thee.
With theſe the kingdom too was gain'd;
Nor was thy farther choice reſtrain'd.
But thy ungrateful heart withdraws
From all ſubjection to my laws.
Thou haſt defil'd thy ſoldier's wife,
And robb'd the injur'd of his life;

By Ammon's ſword thou mad'ſt him bleed,
For which unjuſt and cruel deed,
Murder and blood thy houſe ſhall ſtain,
And horrid crimes diſturb thy reign:
Thy daughters raviſh'd, wives defil'd;
But firſt ſhall die thy new-born child:
Thy life is forfeit too; but I
Thus far remit: Thou ſhalt not die.—
Soon a convulſive illneſs gave
The lovely infant to the grave.
The affected king his guilt deplor'd,
Faſted and pray'd, and fought the Lord:
On the cold ground all night he lies;
But all in vain; his darling dies.

HISTORY THE EIGHTH.

The Rape of Tamar. The Death of Amnon. The Exile of Abſalom; and his Return.

2 *Samuel*, ch. xiii. xiv.

WHILE theſe events the king diſtreſs'd,
Joab the town of Rabbah preſs'd;
And when he hears it ſoon muſt yield,
Great Judah's monarch takes the field.
The city walls they ſoon beat down;
The king they ſeize, and take his crown
Of maſſy gold, with jewels ſpread;
And now it ſhines on David's head.
To great revenge the hoſt proceeds,
And marks its way with horrid deeds:
In ruinous heaps the cities lie:
The natives by fierce tortures die:
The victors ravage, plunder, burn;
And to Jeruſalem return.

The

The king not long his reſt enjoys,
But in his houſhold troubles riſe:
Juſt heaven denounc'd them on his head,
In vengeance for Uriah dead.
Amongſt the maidens round the throne,
Supreme in charms fair Tamar ſhone;
For every elegance approv'd,
She in the court's bright circle mov'd,
By every heart eſteem'd and lov'd.
Amnon, the crown's apparent heir,
With eager eyes beheld the fair;
But, inly pining, long ſuppreſt
The paſſion labouring in his breaſt.
His wild deſire he could not gain,
But muſt his royal ſiſter ſtain;
Nor could his thoughts at once proceed
To venture on the horrid deed;
Till, by a wicked courtier's aid,
At length the virgin he betray'd:

He

He ſickneſs feign'd to gain his end,
And begg'd his ſiſter might attend.
In innocence the damſel came;
To her he urg'd his wicked flame:
With modeſt ſweetneſs in her eyes,
All methods to diſſuade ſhe tries.
Deaf to intreaties, and to tears,
Determin'd the vile wretch appears:
With cruel force the maid he bends,
And thus obtains his wicked ends.
Then the foul brute with rancour burns,
And his fierce flame to hatred turns;
When in a haughty, angry tone,
He bids the injur'd fair be gone.
Much againſt this the princeſs pleads,
As the moſt cruel of his deeds;
And to depart reluctant ſtands:
He will enforce his harſh commands;
And, tho' his pity ſhe implores,
His ſervant turn'd her out of doors.

In depth of anguiſh, now the fair
Rent her rich robes, and tore her hair;
With aſhes on her head appears;
Cries loud, and ſheds vaſt floods of tears.
To ſooth her cares her brother runs,
The moſt polite of David's ſons!
One mother bore the noble pair,
Which ſtood in beauty paſt compare:
Of her diſtreſs he gueſs'd the cauſe;
The princeſs to his houſe withdraws.

The king, in kindneſs to his ſon,
Who ſuch a horrid deed had done,
Tho' much offended, never ſought
To puniſh Amnon as he ought:
But Abſalom in ſecret mourn'd,
And all his heart with hatred burn'd:
He often caſt a gloomy frown
On the young heir of Judah's crown,
Till he aveng'd the injur'd maid,
And with his life the robber paid.

Two

Two circling years in peace proceed;
But ſtill the wretch was doom'd to bleed.
Vaſt flocks of ſheep, the prince's pride,
Fed on mount Ephraim's verdant ſide;
Hot ſummer rul'd the ſultry ſky,
And time of ſhearing now drew nigh.
Fair Tamar's brother then addreſt
The king and court to ſhare his feaſt:
This to accept the king declin'd;
The princes in the journey join'd.
Theſe at the rural feaſt appear,
And Amnon with the reſt was there;
When Abſalom with ſteady hate
Determin'd now to urge his fate,
Commands his ſervants when the wine
In Amnon's eyes was ſeen to ſhine,
To plunge their daggers in his breaſt,
But on their lives not touch the reſt;
The ſervants ſoon their lord obey'd,
And Amnon in the duſt was laid,

Weltering in blood. In wild affright
The princely train then urg'd their flight:
But rumour faſter croſs'd the plain,
And told the king they all were ſlain.
The monarch from his throne deſcends,
And in diſtreſs and anguiſh rends
His royal robes; and on the ground
He lies, his ſervants weeping round;
When to his ears the tidings ſpread
That there was none but Amnon dead:
From Abſalom his death proceeds,
And for his ſiſter's ſake he bleeds.
The king aroſe. The train appears,
And with their father's mix their tears;
Long time they mourn'd for Amnon dead,
And Abſalom to Gerar fled:
Three years in exile he remain'd;
Joab at length the licence gain'd
To fetch him back; and by his aid
Was reconciliation made.

He

He to his father's arms return'd,
And Amnon was no longer mourn'd.

HISTORY the NINTH.

The Rebellion of Abſalom.

2 *Samuel*, ch. xv. *to* xix.

BUT the ungrateful prince could ſhare
His tender parent's love and care,
While in his heart ambition burns,
And urges the moſt vile returns.
Horſes and chariots on him wait,
And ſervants worthy his eſtate;
When by ſmooth condeſcending ways
He ſeeks to gain the people's praiſe;
Much in their love he ſeems to riſe,
And on the crown he caſt his eyes.
Then of his father leave obtains,
And Hebron's ſtately towers he gains;

Pretending

Pretending there to pay his vows,
The pious king his ſuit allows:
Two hundred men the journey join,
All ignorant of his deſign.
When to the royal town he came,
By his command his friends proclaim
With trumpets ſound thro' Iſrael's plains,
That Abſalom at Hebron reigns.

The thoughtleſs diſcontented crowd,
Of revolutions ever proud,
Loudly applaud the bold deſign;
They in vaſt troops his ſtandard join,
And ſuch great numbers ſoon come in,
He makes no doubt the crown to win.

Then for Ahitophel he ſends;
The aged ſtateſman ſoon attends,
In counſel fam'd, by all approv'd,
And by the king rever'd and lov'd;
Thought by the crowd ſupremely wiſe
As the deep counſels of the ſkies.

Quickly

Quickly at the paternal throne
Bold Abſalom's revolt was known,
And all Jeruſalem appears
Amaz'd, diſtreſs'd, and full of tears.
Strong was the faction; every hour
To the uſurper numbers pour;
And ſo much ſtrength the rebels gain,
The king no longer durſt remain
In his own capital. He then,
With his bold guards and valiant men,
And all his houſhold and his friends,
The mount of Olivet aſcends:
Barefoot the king and mournful train
Silent and ſlow the ſummit gain:
In ſolemn grief they all appear,
And worſhip great JEHOVAH there.
The monarch patient and reſign'd,
Had left the ark of GOD behind:
If I'm the LORD's delight, he cries,
The ſight again will chear my eyes;

But

But if his favour crown my ſon,
Lo, here I am! his will be done.—
To ſee their ſovereign in diſtreſs,
The affected troops vaſt grief expreſs;
Faſt flow their tears; nor long they ſtay,
But to Bahurim take their way.

As on the road the king proceeds,
While every heart with ſorrow bleeds,
A ruffian of the houſe of Saul
Preſum'd with foul abuſe to call,
And curſe the king in impious ſtrain;
But he forbids him to be ſlain.

While ſhouts in vallies rend the ſkies,
The rebel troops in order riſe;
At Zion's ſtately towers appear,
And crown the bold uſurper there.
When old and lewd Ahitophel,
With horrid counſel fetch'd from hell,
The impious prince profanely led
To violate his father's bed;

That

That all the armies round might see
They never reconcil'd could be,
And all the troops would bolder fight.
The traitor prince, in open sight,
On a house-top expos'd, proceeds
To the most foul abhorred deeds:
For when in flight the houshold join'd,
The king had left his wives behind.
No thunders roar, nor lightnings fly,
But vengeance with her stores was nigh,
Nor long will sleep. The statesman then
Ask'd of the prince twelve thousand men;
These to the war, he cries, I'll bring,
And overtake the weary king;
Then drive my javelin thro' his heart,
And bid the tribes in peace depart.—
This wicked counsel to oppose,
Call'd by the prince, Hushai rose,

David's faſt friend, tho' in diſguiſe;
To overthrow it thus he tries.
No doubt Ahitophel is wiſe,
And good his counſel muſt remain,
Were but the execution plain:
But we ſhould always keep in ſight
What ſort of men we have to fight.
Are we ſo blind, or have we then
Forgot the deeds of David's men!
Whoſe thundering arms have rag'd around,
And mow'd whole ſquadrons to the ground:
And can we think they'll now ſtand ſtill
While we their royal maſter kill!
Chaf'd in their mind, and full of care,
And fierce and cruel as the bear
Robb'd of her whelps, in wrath they riſe,
And at one ſtroke an army dies;
When our ſurpriz'd, diſhearten'd hoſt,
Will all conclude the day is loſt:

And

And our moſt valiant, when they hear,
Tho' bold as lions, yield to fear.
Let us more warily proceed:
And be it prudently decreed,
That all our armies take the field,
And make our foes by numbers yield;
By might we cannot.—Loud applauſe
The cautious ſpeech of Huſhai draws:
The prince approv'd what he expreſt,
And this will follow as the beſt.
Ahitophel with ſullen pride
Departs; and by a cord he dy'd:
But leſt the rebels ſhould purſue
What the old ſtateſman had in view,
To make all ſure Huſhai then
Warn'd the good monarch and his men
To take ſome place of ſafety. They
Acroſs great Jordan take their way;
All night they march'd; when morning came
They had in ſafety croſs'd the ſtream,

And all the hoſt ſecurely gains
The largeſt town in Gilead's plains.
Them Mahanaim ſhelter yields,
But war ſoon call'd them to the fields.
Now thirſting for a father's blood,
The rebel croſs'd great Jordan's flood;
And his vaſt hoſt on Gilead's plains,
Rang'd in long ranks a while remains:
Till David, to preſerve his crown,
Soon boldly ſallied from the town.
The number of his men he takes,
With prudent care a muſter makes;
To head his army he thinks fit;
But this his troops will not permit.
As through the city gate they paſt,
An anxious eye the monarch caſt:
And if they ſhould the victory won,
He begg'd the troops to ſpare his ſon.
Forward and fearleſs, on the foe
His men in three diviſions go;

And

And when the bloody battle joins,
Reſiſtleſs force the adverſe lines.
Full twenty thouſand rebels bled,
And all the plain was heap'd with dead.
Not far remote wide-ſpreading ſtood
An ancient venerable wood;
The moſſy oaks their branches bend,
And large and low the ſhades deſcend.
Here plung'd the war. In wild affright,
The men of Iſrael took their flight:
Diſmay and terror ſeize them all,
And midſt the entangling bruſh they fall.
In Iſrael's land the prince renown'd
For beauteous form no equal found:
Large locks of hair adorn'd his head,
Which now in rough diſorder ſpread,
And looſely floated in the wind,
As on a mule the flight he join'd.
By David's men the prince was view'd,
And cloſely thro' the wood purſu'd:

As lions roarings ſhake the ſhade,
Their warlike ſhouts the ear invade.
The frighted mule, which now the rein
No longer guides, or can reſtrain,
Ruſh'd headlong thro' the boughs, and there
The prince, entangled by the hair,
Was left ſuſpended. Soon a man
In haſte to David's general ran,
And how he ſaw the prince declar'd;
But as the king would have him ſpar'd,
He durſt not ſmite. Three javelins takes
The chief, and for the tree he makes;
There hung the prince; and thro' his heart
With force he drove the avenging dart.

Engraved for Bellamy's Hist of the Bible.

Abſalom ſlain by Joab.

HISTORY THE TENTH.

The Rebellion of Sheba. The Death of Saul's Son, on Account of his Cruelty to the Gibeonites. David by numbering the People cauſeth a Peſtilence.

2 *Samuel*, ch. xx. *to the End.*—1 *Chron.* ch. xxi.

WHEN the unhappy prince was ſlain,
And further war or ſlaughter vain,
The general the loud trumpet blew:
His warriors ceaſing to purſue,
The rebel hoſt with ſhame withdrew
Each to his tent. The body then
A party of bold Joab's men
Take from the tree: No tears they ſhed,
But caſt in a deep pit the dead,
And cover with a heap of ſtones.
The affected king, with ſighs and groans,
At Mahanaim city gate
Soon heard of the unhappy fate

Of

Of Abſalom; and for his ſon
His tender tears in rivers run;
And in the agonies of grief
Exclaiming, he laments the chief.
The troops of his vaſt ſorrows hear;
And the victorious band appear
Diſtreſs'd, confus'd, and ſneak away
In ſhame, as tho' they'd loſt the day.
The general ſharp the king reproves;
And lets him know that it behoves
Him now to lay aſide his cares,
And ſtrive to ſettle his affairs.
Good David then dries up his tears,
And at the city gate appears;
Then back with joy the armies ſpring,
And crowd about the good old king.
And now the tribe of Judah came
To fetch their king o'er Jordan's ſtream:
They with glad hearts his want ſupply'd,
And croſs'd with ſhouts the roaring tide.

As

At Gilgal all the tribe appear,
And bring their kindred monarch there.
An aged chief of Gilead's land,
Renown'd for wealth, and for command,
Whose bounty had the army fed,
While on his neighbouring plains they spread,
Came with the king. With grateful heart,
The monarch begg'd he'd not depart:
But to Jerusalem resort,
And share the pleasures of the court.
This the old man, with prudent mind,
In favour of his son declin'd:
Then his own lands the sire regain'd,
While with the king the son remain'd.
But now, with anger in their eyes,
The other tribes on Judah rise;
Because without their aid they bring
Back to his throne the victor king.
Their keen reproach in furious sort
The men of Judah soon retort;

And while the hot contention burns,
Bold Sheba thus to Iſrael turns:
Why ſhould our minds on David run!
Or what to us is Jeſſe's ſon!
Can he in affluence make us live!
Or will he fields or vineyards give!
Iſrael be wiſe!—The people heard,
And ſoon in ſhining arms appear'd,
With Sheba at their head. The king
The kindred tribe of Judah bring
To his own city; and prepare
Againſt the Benjamite to war.
There ſtood related to the throne
A valiant man thro' Iſrael known,
Amaſa nam'd, who late had fought
For Abſalom; but David fought
Submiſſive, and his pardon gain'd,
And now was rais'd to high command.
This haughty Joab could not bear;
And as they led their men to war,

Pretending

Pretending kindneſs to impart,
He plung'd his dagger in his heart,
And left him gaſping on the ground,
While ſtreams of blood guſh from the wound.
The new revolter and his men
Fled thro' the land of Iſrael then;
And Abel's walls their troops contain'd,
A town that ſtood in Syria's land.
Joab advances on the ground,
And his long lines the town ſurround;
Till wiſe advice a matron gives,
By which the endanger'd city lives:
And they, that war no farther ſpread,
Throw o'er their walls the rebel's head.
And now o'er Judah's hills and plains
For three long years pale famine reigns;
No ſhowers refreſh the thirſty fields,
Nor the parch'd land its harveſt yields.
The pious monarch ſought the ſkies;
To him JEHOVAH thus replies:

Innocent blood the land hath ſtain'd,
For when fierce Saul o'er Iſrael reign'd,
The Gibeonites in wrath he ſlew,
And from all Iſrael's oath withdrew.
Then to appeaſe the frowning ſky,
Seven of Saul's ſons directly die
On Gibeah's hill; hung up ſublime,
To expiate their father's crime.
Fair Rizpah mourn'd her children dead,
On the hard rock a cloth ſhe ſpread:
'Twas harveſt time; and night and day
She drove the beaſts and fowls away.
The king, with vanity elate,
Revolving on his princely ſtate,
To his brave general gave command
To paſs with ſpeed o'er all the land,
And number with a notary's care
How many thouſands Iſrael are.
The warlike chiefs reluctant view
The great command: But to purſue

His

His plan, reſolv'd the monarch ſtands,
And ſends them out o'er all the lands.
Diſpleas'd they then the taſk begin,
And bring the mighty number in
At nine months end. With angry eye
The LORD beholds, and numbers die.
A prophet ſoon to David came,
Reproves him in JEHOVAH's name;
And for his late high-minded vice,
He thus propoſes to his choice:
Three months before his foes to fly;
Three days by peſtilence to die;
Or three years famine in the land.
The mournful king, by GOD's own hand
Chuſes to ſuffer, not by men.
To death's deſtroying angel then
JEHOVAH his commiſſion gives:
He thro' the land with fury drives.
At morn the peſtilence began,
Wide-waſting thro' the land it ran;

And ere the evening clos'd the day,
In duſt full ſeventy thouſand lay.
Then whirling like a raging flame
His dreadful ſword, the angel came,
O'er Zion's towers appears in ſight,
And ſtands prepar'd the town to ſmite.
The king beholds, to earth he falls,
And on the GOD of Iſrael calls:
Great GOD of All! regard my prayer,
Reſtrain thy wrath; thy people ſpare,
For they are guiltleſs: Set them free,
And let thy vengeance fall on me:
Let all my houſe atonement make;
Why ſhould they ſuffer for my ſake!—
Propitious to the monarch's prayer,
The avenging GOD conſents to ſpare:
By his command an altar's rais'd,
And to JEHOVAH victims blaz'd
On the adjacent threſhing-floor,
Which death's dread angel hover'd o'er:

Him God commands to ſtay his hand,
And health and peace now bleſs'd the land.

HISTORY THE ELEVENTH.

The old Age and Death of King David. He fixes the Succeſſion in Solomon his Son.

1 *Kings*, ch. i. ii.—1 *Chron.* ch. xxii. *to the End.*

THE good old king at length appears
Preſs'd with a heavy weight of years;
On life's remoteſt verge he lies,
And vital heat its aid denies:
When his kind ſervants, with deſire
To cheriſh life's declining fire,
Search'd all the land around, and led
A beauteous virgin to his bed.
From Shunam's plains the damſel came;
Abiſhag was the fair one's name:

She

She in the king's cold bosom lies,
And with the warmth of youth supplies.
But ere the monarch lays his head
With the renown'd and mighty dead,
The task remains to fix the throne,
And to his best-lov'd, wisest son,
Secure the kingdom. Soon he sends
To all his courtiers and his friends,
His noble guards, and mighty men;
They all attend. The monarch then
Opens the counsels of his breast,
And thus the listening train address'd:
When by JEHOVAH's aid I rose
Victorious o'er my numerous foes,
And, by his heavenly favour bless'd,
From all my wars he gave me rest,
I had it in my heart to raise
A stately temple to his praise:
But as in war I conquest gain'd,
And oft with blood my hands were stain'd,

The God of Peace and Love refus'd,
And from the task I stood excus'd.
Yet, said the Lord, it shall be done
By thy successor and thy son.
Him to high honour will I raise,
And crown with peace his happy days:
A stately temple he shall rear,
And fix my constant worship there.—
My sons are many: Out of those
'Tis Solomon the Lord hath chose:
Vast is the work; the prince is young;
Assist him, all ye wise and strong!
From cities sack'd, and battles gain'd,
Vast were the spoils which we detain'd:
These, while the track of war I trod,
I dedicated to my God:
And now display'd before your eyes
The massy gold and silver lies.—
Then for his son the monarch sent,
And thus explain'd his great intent:

My Solomon! it is decreed,
That to the crown thou ſhalt ſucceed:
Be bold in heart, and not afraid,
But truſt in great JEHOVAH's aid.
To thee he has the taſk aſſign'd
To build his temple: Let thy mind
With diligence the charge purſue;
Vaſt is the work we have in view:
Theſe are the models; and behold
The heaps of ſilver, and of gold,
All ſorts of precious ſtones, and ſtores
Which rock, or mine, or ocean pours;
The ſpoils of war, in battle won;
All theſe I have reſerv'd, my ſon,
To make GOD's habitation ſhine;
And now the weighty charge is thine.
But that ſucceſs may crown thy days,
And heaven may ſmile on all thy ways,
Be to thy father's GOD inclin'd,
And ſerve him with a willing mind:

The

The heart of every man he knows,
And will in vengeance cruſh his foes;
But from the man that loves his law,
His goodneſs never will withdraw.—
While thus he ſpake, the liſtening train
Their ſtrong emotions ſcarce contain;
Vaſt ſhouts expreſs their boundleſs joys,
And to the LORD they ſacrifice.
But diſcontent and gloomy care
Oppreſs'd the crown's apparent heir,
Whom Abſalom's fair mother bear,
Adonijah, the eldeſt ſon,
Who ſtrives in ſpite of Solomon
To mount the throne. He had prepar'd
Horſes and chariots, and a guard,
With all that royalty became;
Nor had his father given him blame.
A ſumptuous feaſt he makes, and ſends
Both to his brethren and his friends;

With them he the old general brings,
And various ſervants of the king's;
To Enrogel the train repair,
And hold a ſocial banquet there:
And while with joy the mountains ring,
They ſhout, Adonijah is king!

This Nathan, the eſteemed ſeer,
Without reſentment cannot hear:
He reads the counſels of the ſkies,
And knows that Solomon muſt riſe
To David's throne. In haſte he goes,
To Bathſheba the matter ſhews;
And to prevent the baſe deſign,
They both in one petition join
To the old king; and beg that he
Will name the man that is to be
Exalted to great Judah's throne;
And make his fix'd intention known:
For it appears paſt ſcruple plain,
Adonijah intends to reign.

The

The king replies, Sure as I live,
To Solomon my crown I give!
Him I exalt to ſovereign ſway;
And he ſhall mount the throne to-day.—
Zadok the prieſt, Nathan the ſeer,
In joint commiſſion now appear.
The mighty men all crowd around,
And with the trumpet's ſolemn ſound
The joyful train exulting goes
Where Gihon's chryſtal fountain flows,
And there the holy oil they ſhed
On the young prince's ſacred head;
Whom on his father's mule they bring,
And ſolemnly proclaim him king.
Loud ſhout the people, and their joys
Shake the whole city with the noiſe;
The roaring trumpets cleave the ground,
And pipes and flutes alternate ſound.
Adonijah and all his train
Were feaſting on the neighbouring plain,

Whem

When the loud ſhouts that ſhook the earth
Diſturb and interrupt their mirth:
The cauſe they learn, nor long they ſtay,
But in confuſion ſneak away.
Unable to ſupport his cauſe,
The conſcious prince with ſhame withdraws;
And anxious now to ſave his head,
He to the altar trembling fled;
There begs for life; and when they bring
Before his brother and his king,
Submiſſive bows: The prince forgives,
And if a worthy man he lives.

And now 'tis plain the day draws nigh
When good old David is to die.
To the young king he gives at large
His laſt advice, and ſolemn charge;
Commands that he will ne'er withdraw
From GOD's high worſhip, and his law:
By this he will all bleſſings gain,
And proſperous peace will crown his reign.

Two perſons the old king decreed
By the young monarch's ſword to bleed:
Shimei had curs'd; and Joab ſtood
Charg'd with the horrid guilt of blood;
Innocent blood, in treachery ſhed,
Of Abner and Amaſa dead.
Then ſinging great JEHOVAH's praiſe,
The good old monarch ends his days;
And in his own melodious ſtrains,
Thro' every age his fame remains.
Smit with the love of ſacred ſong,
In early youth his lyre he ſtrung,
And made JEHOVAH's wonderous name
His conſtant truſt, and noble theme.
In his bold ſtrain, which warbling flows,
The wonders of creation roſe;
To providence the ſong proceeds,
And ſhews JEHOVAH's mighty deeds,
His wonderous works, and all his ways,
To man's admiring view diſplays:

Then

Then nearer home his notes he brings,
When he his vaſt experience ſings;
And ſhews diſplay'd before our eyes,
His own deep ſorrows, and his joys.
But nobler flights, and bolder fire,
Swell with full notes the ſounding lyre,
When to our wondering view he brings
The great Almighty KING OF KINGS;
And in his high-exalted ſtrains,
MESSIAH in full glory reigns,
Who late ſhall mount great David's throne,
Make o'er the earth his glory known;
Extend his ſway from ſhore to ſhore,
And reign when time ſhall be no more.

HISTORY the TWELFTH.

The Death of Adonijah. Solomon ſacrifices at Gibeon. He chuſes Wiſdom: And by the Force of natural Affection diſcovers the real Mother of a diſputed Child.

1 *Kings*, ch. ii. iii.—2 *Chron.* ch. i.

WHEN Solomon upon his throne
With majeſty and glory ſhone,
To him his royal mother came.
He riſes, and ſalutes the dame
With filial reverence. Her requeſt
Before the throne ſhe thus addreſs'd:
The fair Abiſhag for his ſpouſe,
If this thy ſovereign will allows,
Adonijah would gladly gain.—
The king his wrath could ſcarce contain,
When with a frown, And why, he cry'd,
Should ſhe be made the rebel's bride!

The kingdom aſk! he this intends;
Aſk for himſelf, and for his friends!
But as I live, this very day
The traitor with his life ſhall pay.—
Then orders to his guard he gives,
Adonijah no longer lives.
Joab ſoon hearing of the end
Of this brave prince, who was his friend;
And that the prieſt had been put down,
For being unfaithful to the crown;
Conſcious of guilt, his danger ſees,
And hopeleſs to the altar flees.
There by the king's command he falls;
For this the blood of Abner calls.
To Shimei then the monarch ſends,
On him the Benjamite attends.
Build thee an houſe with ſpeed, he cry'd,
And in Jeruſalem abide:
The day that Kiſhon's ſtream is paſs'd,
Sure as thou liv'ſt, ſhall be thy laſt.—

But

But Shimei ſoon, not taking heed
By theſe directions to proceed,
The great injunction diſobey'd,
And with his life the forfeit paid.

The king now ſettled on his throne,
To make his riſing glory known,
Fetch'd a fair ſpouſe from Egypt's land;
The monarch's daughter there he gain'd:
She in Jeruſalem remain'd,
Till from his works he time could ſpare
To build a palace for the fair.

And now his father's God he ſought,
And to his altar offerings brought.
When Gibeon's ſtately hill he gains,
The tabernacle here remains
Which Moſes in the deſert made;
And here his vows the monarch paid.
A thouſand victims he decreed
In ſacrifice to God to bleed:

And with glad hearts, and ſacred ſong,
His joyful train the feaſt prolong.
When ſilent night her veil had ſpread,
The monarch ſlumbering on his bed,
On him a blaze of glory broke,
And thus the GOD of Iſrael ſpoke:
Thy grateful heart, young prince, I prize,
And I accept thy ſacrifice;
High in my favour thou ſhalt live,
Then ſay what bleſſing ſhall I give!—
Eternal GOD, the king replies,
Teach me! oh teach to be wiſe!
May juſtice thro' my land be known,
And wiſdom's laws ſupport my throne.
Give me my people's love to gain,
And in their hearts ſecurely reign,
To every worthy deed inclin'd,
The friend and father of mankind.—
Good is thy choice, the LORD rejoins,
While all around his glory ſhines,

That

That wisdom on thee I bestow
More than on mortal mind below:
Nor only this, but on thy state
Shall every lesser blessing wait:
Riches and honours; all the things
So much esteem'd by vulgar kings:
High in the earth thy throne shall stand;
And if thou keep my each command,
Long shall thy life be in the land.—
When from his bed the monarch rose,
Soon to Jerusalem he goes:
The nation glory in their king,
With vocal joy the mountains ring,
And where the holy ark abode
They sacrifice to Israel's GOD.
His people's love the monarch gain'd,
And by his wisdom judg'd the land.
As on his throne, in regal state,
Exalted high, the monarch sate,

Before

Before his ſeat two women came,
His royal juſtice there to claim:
One brought a live child, one a dead;
The laſt approach'd the throne, and ſaid,
My lord the king, 'tis truth I tell!
Thy ſervant and this woman dwell
Both in one houſe: Each bare a ſon.
Before three days their courſe had run:
The eldeſt mine: For want of care,
By night ſhe overlaid her heir;
But while I ſlept ſhe me beguil'd,
And took away my living child;
Then on my boſom laid the dead,
And all in ſilence left my bed.
I woke when bright the morning ſhone,
My breaſt I offer'd to my ſon;
But how ſurpriz'd. A cloſer ſight
Brought the whole myſtery to light;
And by plain marks I could divine
That the dead infant was not mine.—

With

With ſharp return the other ſaid,
'Tis falſhood all! yours is the dead,
The living mine!—With quick replies
Thus each aſſerts, and each denies.
Bring me a ſword, the monarch cry'd!
The living infant I divide.
On equals grounds I view your claim,
One half be given to either dame.—
Reverſe, O king, the great decree,
The mother ſaid; it ſhall not be!
My deareſt child ſhall not be ſlain,
But rather with my foe remain.—
The monarch now the mother ſaw,
Nature he knew, and nature's law;
And while her heart with joy o'er-run,
He to her arms reſtor'd her ſon.

HISTORY THE THIRTEENTH.

The Building and Dedication of Solomon's Temple.

1 *Kings*, ch. v. *to* viii.—2 *Chron.* ch. ii. *to* viii.

THREE years great Solomon had reign'd,
And high increasing honours gain'd,
When the glad monarch calls to mind
The task his father had assign'd:
And will a stately temple rear,
And fix JEHOVAH's worship there.
He to the Tyrian monarch sends,
Hiram and David had been friends,
Who favouring now the king's request,
Sends of his servants who could best
From Lebanon's high shady crown
Hew the wide-branching cedars down.
They to soft Sidon's sea-beat shore
O'er craggy rocks the timber bore:

Thence

Thence floated o'er the foamy ſea,
At Joppa the fair burden lay.
An hundred thouſand able men,
Appointed by the monarch, then
Hard marble from the mountain tear,
And lay its flinty forehead bare:
Then the rough ſtone, firſt ſquar'd and wrought,
In carriages to Zion brought.

The great materials thus prepar'd,
A wonderous pile the monarch rear'd.
A mighty ſquare, both vaſt and wide,
Aſcending from the mountain ſide
In three fair ſtories large and tall
Surrounded with a marble wall.
Vaſt open courts within are found,
Long galleries riſe in order round.
Rich were the builders great deſigns,
And bright the high-wrought marble ſhines.
Huge columns, an extended row
Along the ſumptuous building go;

And the carv'd cornice nobly ſhone,
Conſpicuous in the poliſh'd ſtone.
But far within a choſen ſpace
Was made the ſanctuary's place:
Of marble was the ſtructure rais'd,
In flaming gold the inſide blaz'd.
And here the pious monarch brings
The tabernacle's holy things.
But in the inmoſt laſt receſs
Was rear'd the place which GOD would bleſs
With his own preſence. Form'd compleat
To hold the ark and mercy-ſeat.
Two bright cherubic forms appear,
And ſpread their wings in order there.
Yet none muſt view the ſhining throne,
But once a year the prieſt alone.
In a large open court, before
The holy ſanctuary door,
Stood the great brazen altar, where
The prieſts in ſacrifice appear.

And

And where the conſtant victims blaze,
While trumpets ſound JEHOVAH's praiſe.
On either ſide the ſacred throne
A mighty brazen column ſhone,
Which the great builders' ſkill proclaims,
Jachin and Boaz were their names.
And in the wide-extended ſpace
Was plac'd a wonderous ſea of braſs.
Twelve molten oxen ſtrong and fair
The wide-extended laver bear.
Which with huge limbs and open brow
Seem'd as they ſtood in braſs to low.
Fix'd was the ſea. Ten vaſes vaſt
With ſkill the Tyrian artiſt caſt,
For curious rich device approv'd,
And on four brazen wheels each mov'd:
While veſſels ſtood of various mold,
Shining around of pureſt gold.
Six circling ſuns, with plenty crown'd,
Led the alternate ſeaſons round,

While the prodigious fabric roſe,
And on the work ſucceſsful goes.
The ſeventh beheld the finiſh'd frame.
The eighth the tribes of Iſrael came
To dedicate the houſe to God,
And there to fix his bright abode
By ſacrifice and fervent prayer,
And ſetting up his worſhip there.
The tabernacle's ſacred ſtore
A train of prieſts and Levites bore.
With this the ſanctuary grac'd,
And all with care in order plac'd.
The ſacred ark, the prieſts and king
With ſolemn, ſlow proceſſion bring;
The laſt of all the holy things,
And place between the cherub's wings.

And now with grateful heart and tongue
The holy prieſts an anthem ſung:
When from an hundred voices riſe
God's goodneſs, and his people's joys.

The

The trumpets blow, the ſacred lyre
And various inſtruments conſpire
To raiſe and dignify the ſound.
When on a ſudden all around,
Before the holy anthem ends,
The glory of the LORD deſcends,
And fills the houſe with cloud and fire,
Which makes the dazzled prieſts retire.
Then to the court proceed the bands
Where the great brazen altar ſtands,
The inner court. The king decreed
The choſen victims then to bleed;
Theſe on the holy altar laid,
Rais'd on a lofty ſtand he pray'd:
Great GOD of Iſrael, thou whoſe throne,
Eternal, infinite, unknown,
No mortal eye can bear to ſee,
Nor is there any GOD like thee,
Whoſe glory ever ſhall endure;
Whoſe word is true, whoſe promiſe ſure:

To David thy rich promiſe run
That his ſucceſſor and his ſon
Should build an houſe for the abode
And conſtant worſhip of his GOD.
But will indeed the GOD moſt high
The Eternal Father of the Sky,
Whoſe boundleſs glories none can tell,
In Zion condeſcend to dwell!
Not wide creation's vaſt domain
Can the eternal GOD contain;
Much leſs theſe walls. Yet condeſcend
From heaven's exalted height to bend;
Here fix the footſtool of thy throne,
And make thy conſtant preſence known.
Within this houſe record thy name,
Accept our offerings as they flame,
Regard our praiſes day by day,
And hear thy people when they pray:
In each diſtreſs, in every caſe,
Whene'er thine Iſrael ſeek thy face,

From

From heaven's high ſummit bow thine ear,
And bring thy great deliverance near.
Deſcend JEHOVAH ever bleſs'd!
And in this building take thy reſt.
All ſtrength and righteouſneſs are thine!
Oh make thy prieſts with glory ſhine,
Cloath'd with ſalvation from on high,
While all thy people ſhout for joy.—
While thus he ſpake, vaſt ſheets of flame
Down from the ſkies directly came:
The fires around the altar play,
And burnt the victims as they lay.
Such brightneſs fills the houſe, that all
The people on their faces fall,
And Iſrael's GOD united praiſe,
Whoſe awful glories round them blaze.
With growing gladneſs in his breaſt,
The monarch then the people bleſs'd,
And fourteen days he held a feaſt.

Full

Full twenty thouſand oxen bleed,
An hundred thouſand ſheep ſucceed;
All day with fire the altar ſhines,
And in vaſt joy the nation joins.

HISTORY THE FOURTEENTH.

The Riches and Glory of King Solomon: His vaſt Works, and Fame for Wiſdom: He receives a Viſit from the Queen of Sheba.

1 *Kings*, ch. ix. x.—2 *Chron.* ch. viii. ix.

WHEN the prodigious pile was rais'd,
And high in air its turrets blaz'd,
And all religious rites appear
In their reſpective order there;
The king proceeds in vaſt deſigns,
And in great works his wiſdom ſhines.
A mighty wall the utmoſt bounds
Of great Jeruſalem ſurrounds:

Vaſt

Vaſt palaces o'erſpread the ground,
And Millo's vale no more is found.
Huge towers aſcend towards the ſkies;
Great mountains ſink and vallies riſe.
At diſtance far the dreary waſte
Appears with ſumptuous cities grac'd:
Green ſhades ſpread wide the deſert o'er,
And rivers run unknown before.
O'er all the world the king became
Supreme in wealth, and high in fame:
From great Euphrates' roaring wave
To ſeven-mouth'd Nile, whoſe ſurges lave
Thy ſhores, O Egypt, ſtretch'd his ſway;
And diſtant lands their tribute pay.
With proſperous peace and plenty crown'd,
Rever'd by all the nations round,
He rear'd on high his regal throne,
And with increaſing glory ſhone:
O'er all mankind ſupremely wiſe,
He fetch'd his knowledge from the ſkies,

Search'd all the works of nature o'er,
And Egypt's learning was no more.
He ſaw with one extended view
The vegetable kingdom through,
From the Vaſt cedar ſtrait and tall
To the green hyſſop on the wall.
All beaſts he knew; the wild, the tame,
The uſeful horſe, the ſavage game;
The lion, monarch of the plains,
And faithful dog that ſerves the ſwains;
The feather'd race his thought purſu'd,
And he with nice diſcernment view'd
The towering eagle mount the ſkies,
While near the ground the ſparrow flies.
To teach weak mortals wiſdom's laws
He vice in her true colours draws,
Aſſumes the preacher's powerful ſtrain,
And proves that all their works are vain.
Vaſt were the labours of his muſe!
His ſatyr every vice purſues;

His proverbs teach the king to rule,
Diſplay the wiſe man and the fool.
O'er the wide fields of ſacred ſong,
With majeſty he march'd along;
His ſtrains in Hebrew grandeur ſhine,
And ſing the force of love divine.
A thouſand poems from the throne
In all the force of language ſhone.
The wiſdom that inſpir'd his breaſt
He us'd to make his people bleſs'd:
Plenty as ſtones that ſpread the ground
Was pureſt gold in Zion found:
He brought from Ophir's diſtant ſhore
O'er foaming ſeas the ſhining ore,
Which in ſuch weight his people ſhare,
That ſilver was no more their care.
To earth's remoteſt regions came
The tidings of the monarch's fame;
And from beneath the ſultry ſkies
Where roaring Nile's two ſources riſe,

Rich Sheba's queen and all her train
The ſtately towers of Zion gain.
The king ſhe with hard queſtions try'd,
And every doubt he ſatisfy'd.
Fame's partial voice ſhe blames, and ſays
It has not founded half his praiſe.
His vaſt majeſtic works ſhe views,
And all his great deſigns purſues.
High admiration ſeiz'd her breaſt,
Which having to the king expreſt,
She with rich preſents takes her leave,
Worthy the monarch to receive.
What ſhe requires the king beſtows,
And to her land well pleas'd ſhe goes.

HISTORY THE FIFTEENTH.

Solomon in his old Age is ſeduced to Idolatry by his numerous Wives. His Troubles and Death.

1 *Kings*, ch. xi.

BUT tho' the king ſuch glory gain'd,
One weakneſs in his heart remain'd:
Too often ſhook by love's alarms,
Nor ſteel'd to beauty's fatal charms.
Smit with each fair one which he view'd,
The monarch his deſires purſu'd
Without control, till he had led
Seven hundred ſpouſes to his bed,
All nobly born. Nor thus reſtrain'd,
Three hundred concubines he gain'd.
With theſe, as fancy leads, he roves
Thro' his fair gardens and his groves:
In them his chief delight he takes,
And wiſdom his old age forſakes.

Great

Great princeſſes and humble ſlaves
By turns his fickle bed receives:
Now Judah's daughters are his care,
Anon the foreign heathen fair:
For, not to Iſrael's land confin'd,
He ſearch'd the globe with roving mind:
From every nation fetch'd a bride,
And ſtood to every king ally'd.
For each ſoft ſyren, as he turns,
His heart with fooliſh fondneſs burns,
And worſhips, to oblige the dame,
The idol god from whence ſhe came.
To pleaſe his fair Zidonian ſpouſe,
At her Aſhtoreth's ſhrine he bows:
By Moabitiſh charms inſnar'd,
To Chemoſh he a temple rear'd:
And with his Ammonitiſh queen
Was at dire Molech's altar ſeen.
The LORD with juſt reſentment ſaw
The doating king forſake his law.

To

To pleaſe his wives; and bolder ſtill,
Build temples on a neighbouring hill,
And idol-worſhip there purſue,
JEHOVAH's temple full in view.
When to the monarch in a dream,
The voice of GOD in terror came:
Ungrateful wretch! and can thy heart
Thus from thy father's GOD depart!
Canſt thou to ſenſeleſs idols bow!
Ah! where is all thy wiſdom now!
But for thy every impious deed,
And foul revolt, I have decereed
To rend the kingdom from thy ſon.
All Iſrael's mighty tribes but one
Shall a new king in anger make:
I give that one for David's ſake.—
The doating king the tribes deſpiſe,
And various troubles round him riſe.
The diſcontented murmuring crowd
Againſt his meaſures ſpeak too loud:

His vaſt prodigious buildings blame,
Againſt his great expence exclaim,
Nor worth the coſt eſteem the fame.

Bold Jeroboam at their head
Soon from the king's reſentment fled,
For meeting in the field a ſeer,
He of his garment ſtrip'd him there;
In twelve parts tears the coat, and then
Bids the bold warrior take him ten.
The king is old and fooliſh now,
And will to every idol bow;
For this the LORD will ſhake his throne,
And take the kingdom from his ſon.
Ten tribes ſhall be from Judah rent:
Soon ſhall arrive the great event.
To theſe thou ſhalt as king ſucceed;
So hath the eternal GOD decreed:
And if thou to his law incline,
The kingdom ſhall be ever thine.—

So

So ſpake the prophet: And the king
Getting ſome knowledge of the thing,
Sought to take off the warrior's head:
To Egypt then the hero fled.
Soon after this the monarch dy'd,
And Zion's tower his tomb ſupply'd.

HISTORY

THE HISTORY OF THE HOLY BIBLE.

BOOK VII.

FROM THE

Death of Solomon, to the Babyloniſh Captivity:

CONTAINING

The Tranſactions of about 450 Years.

THE

HISTORY

OF THE

HOLY BIBLE.

BOOK VII.

CONTAINING

Death of Solomon, to the Babylonish Captivity:

The Transactions of about 450 Years.

HISTORY THE FIRST.

Rehoboam, the Son of Solomon, rejecting the Counsel of the Old Men, gives rough Answers to the People concerning the Tribute; and Ten Tribes revolt to Jeroboam.

1 *Kings*, ch. xii.—2 *Chron.* ch. x.

TO Shechem soon the tribes repair,
And hold a grand assembly there,
Bold Jeroboam at their head:
He heard that Solomon was dead,
And then return'd. To fix the throne
Of Solomon's appointed son,
Was now their view. The prince there came,
And Rehoboam was his name:
Born of an Ammonitish queen,
He forty circling years had seen.
Before the holy oil they shed,
Or place the crown upon his head,

The

The tribes appear before his ſeat,
And beg his goodneſs will abate
The taxes which his father laid.
The former king, they jointly ſaid,
With heavy burdens preſs'd the land,
Such his prodigious work conſtrain'd:
But now that monarch is no more,
And all the vaſt expence is o'er,
The groaning realm we hope you'll bleſs,
Relieve, and make our burden leſs.—
The prince replies, Depart in peace,
I ſhall conſider on the caſe:
The third day hence you may return,
And then my anſwer you ſhall learn.—
Then for the counſellors he ſends,
His father's try'd and faithful friends;
The aged train the prince attends,
What anſwer ſhould this people gain,
Who of my father's tax complain?—

So

So aſk'd the prince; and then replies
Each aged ſtateſman, O be wiſe;
With kind reply the people pleaſe,
Their cares relieve, their burdens eaſe;
So will their hearts to thee incline,
And Iſrael's crown be ever thine.—

Then of the young, the briſk and gay,
The king enquiring what to ſay,
They view the people's claim with ſcorn,
And to the queſtion thus return:
What glories ſhine in kingly ſtate,
When every idle clown muſt prate!
Shall teach his monarch to be wiſe!
And tell him where his error lies!
Should the great heir of Iſrael's crown
To this illuſtrious crew bow down;
Revere the throne of vulgar wit,
And to their each demand ſubmit;
Farewell the good which empire brings!
Farewell the majeſty of kings!

Then be thyſelf; aſſume the throne,
And make thy juſt reſentment known;
Let the bold crowd be wiſdom taught,
And anſwer as a monarch ought.—
The young companions of his days,
Bred up with him in courtly eaſe,
Tho' not in war or counſel try'd,
But full of vanity and pride,
Thus the enquiring king addreſt,
And their advice he lik'd the beſt.

The third bright morning ſhone, and now
Before their prince the people bow,
And all the tribes attentive wait
To hear his anſwer. With high ſtate
And ſolemn ſtiffneſs, thus he ſpake:
When ſubjects' pride ſhall undertake
To blame, to dictate, and to rule,
They muſt eſteem their king a fool.
The odious tax which you deſpiſe
My father laid, and he was wiſe:

And

And think not that I ſhall remit
The juſt demand when you think fit;
Rather conclude, that from the throne
I'll make my right to rule you known;
Spread royal terrors o'er the land,
And make my ſubjects feel my hand.—
While thus he ſpake, hoarſe murmurs riſe,
And Jeroboam thus replies:
Are we to be inſulted thus!
What's David and his houſe to us!
To your own tents, ye tribes, withdraw;
And let the prince inforce his law;
While abject ſlaves their tribute bring,
And know the curſe of ſuch a king!—
Forthwith the diſcontented crowd
In mad confuſion roar'd aloud;
Boldly preſume their prince to blame,
And with reproaches load his name;
With furious faction rage and ſwell,
And ſtand determin'd to rebel.

The king, the tumult to aſſwage,
And pacify the people's rage,
Sent the old treaſurer of the crown;
But with huge ſtones they beat him down.
The prince the growing tempeſt ſees;
He mounts his car in haſte and flees;
Laſhes along his foaming ſteeds,
And to Jeruſalem proceeds.
Judah's ſtrong tribe ſupports his throne,
And him their rightful ſovereign own:
They ſerve him with a willing mind,
And Benjamin with them was join'd.
The other tribes, in ſtorming rage,
With Jeroboam ſoon engage:
The aſpiring chief at Shechem ſtaid,
And there was king of Iſrael made.

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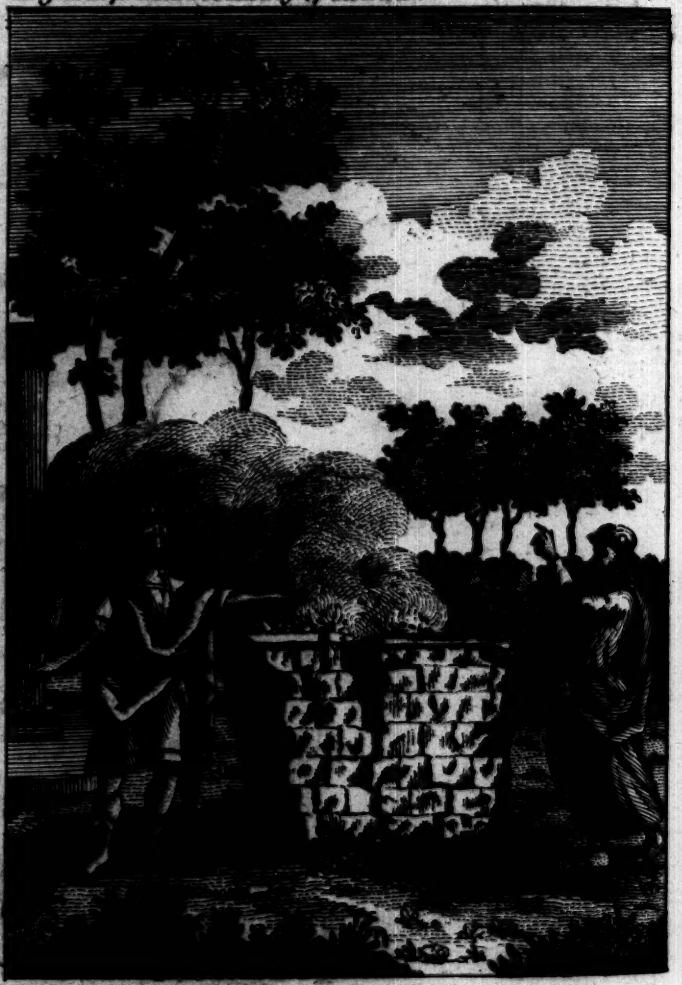
Engraved for Fellows's History of the Bible.



Jeroboams hand withered.

HISTORY THE SECOND.

The Life and Idolatry of Jeroboam, the first King of the Ten Tribes.*

1 *Kings*, ch. xii. *to* xiv.—2 *Chron.* ch. xii, xiii.

OLD Nebat's bold aſpiring ſon,
Exalted now to Iſrael's throne,
Takes every method which he may
To ſtrengthen and confirm his ſway.
Shechem he fortifies with care,
And holds his regal ſceptre there,
Till Tirzah roſe to greater fame,
And this his royal ſeat became.

But

* The tribes of Iſrael are now become two nations; the hiſtory of which, for the ſake of perſpicuity, will not be blended together. But the hiſtory of the kings of Iſrael will firſt be carried on, from the revolt of the ten tribes from the houſe of David, to their captivity by Shalmaneſer, king of Aſſyria: And then the hiſtory of the kings of Judah, from the death of Solomon, to the Babyloniſh captivity.

But as the temple of the LORD,
Where Iſrael's GOD would be ador'd,
Exalted ſtood on Zion's hill,
And there the people worſhipp'd ſtill,
Vaſt fears in his vain heart ariſe,
That when they went to ſacrifice
The tribes their bold revolt would mourn,
And ſoon to David's houſe return.
An impious meaſure then he takes,
And idol gods to worſhip makes.
At Egypt, where he late had been,
He had the horned Apis ſeen;
And Iſrael's ſons muſt now behold
Two yearling calves in molten gold.
One ſeen at Bethel's hill was rear'd,
The other ſenſeleſs head appear'd
At diſtant Dan. Then by command
It was proclaim'd thro' all the land,
Behold thy gods, O Iſrael, riſe,
In whom thy future ſafety lies!

From

From Egypt's land they brought thee safe!
Then now adore each golden calf
Which you at Dan or Bethel see:
And 'tis the king's supreme decree
No more at Zion you appear,
But pay your constant worship there.
A solemn feast they then proclaim,
And soon a great assembly came.
At Bethel's grove appears the king;
The chosen victims there they bring;
The incense burns, the altars smoke,
While they the brainless calf invoke.
Loud shouts arise from all the bands,
The monarch by the altar stands.
But while the sacrifices flame,
A man of GOD from Judah came:
Full on the king he rolls his eyes,
And loudly to the altar cries:
O altar! altar! hear the word!
Of Israel's GOD, creation's LORD!

From David's houſe ſhall riſe a child
By whom this worſhip ſhall be ſpoil'd;
Joſiah nam'd; and he ſhall ſee
Thy prieſts dead bodies burn on thee:
And now to prove the great event,
You ſhall behold the altar rent.—
The king enrag'd the ſpeech to hear,
With indignation view'd the ſeer;
Againſt him vengeful ſtretch'd his hand,
And to detain him gave command.
As ſome majeſtic ſtately oak
Stands blaſted by the lightning's ſtroke,
While the bare arms expand on high,
Stiff pointing to the angry ſky;
So points the frowning king; and he
Feels his rais'd arm ſtiff as the tree.
The altar burſt, and all around
The ſtones lie ſcatter'd on the ground:
Beneath his feet the veſſels lie,
And in his face the aſhes fly.

The

The king amaz'd, in vaſt diſmay
Now begs the holy man to pray
That GOD will his dead arm reſtore,
And ſmite him in his wrath no more.
The affected prophet ſought the LORD,
The wither'd arm was ſoon reſtor'd:
The king propos'd a feaſt to make,
The man of GOD will not partake.
'Tis great JEHOVAH's high command,
That I all hunger's calls withſtand,
Nor eat in this polluted land:—
Warn'd by his GOD, the ſeer thus ſpoke;
But ſoon the great injunction broke.
A brother prophet and a friend,
By pious fraud obtain'd his end:
With him to eat the good man ſtays,
But dearly for his folly pays;
For by a roaring lion ſlain,
He lay expos'd on Bethel's plain.

Nor would the king his folly learn,
And to his country's GOD return;
But ſtill perſiſting in the ſin
His impious hand had dar'd begin,
GOD's holy worſhip he reproves,
And ſets up altars in his groves:
On Bethel's mount his idol ſtands;
And impious feaſt his word commands.
The LORD, to make his anger known,
With illneſs ſmites the tyrant's ſon:
The father, to explore his fate,
Commands his queen to hide her ſtate;
To diſtant Shiloh then repair,
And ſhe will find the prophet there
Who told him that he ſhould be king;
Of him enquire, and tidings bring
Whether the child will live or die.—
The queen was willing to comply;
And ſoon diſguis'd to Shiloh goes.
Her, e'er ſhe came, the prophet knows:

And tho' grown blind by age, he cries,
Where is the need of this diſguiſe!
Come in, thou Jeroboam's queen!
A dreadful viſion I have ſeen,
Concerning thee and thine.—The dame,
Amaz'd and trembling, forward came.
Then ſpake the ſeer: Thus ſaith the LORD,
Who ſurely will perform his word;
To Jeroboam be it known
'Twas I that rais'd him to the throne,
But his ungrateful heart withdraws
From all my worſhip and my laws;
With Egypt's gods all Iſrael's land
Is now diſhonour'd and prophan'd,
And high his molten idols ſtand.
For this, in wrath I have decreed
Deſtruction to the wretch's ſeed:
Worthleſs and vile, where-e'er they're found
Like dung I'll tread them to the ground:

And with their loath'd abhorred dead
The dogs and vultures ſhall be fed.
Then to thy houſe with ſpeed return,
For thy dead ſon ſhall Iſrael mourn:
No remedy his life can ſave;
And only he ſhall find a grave,
Of all his kindred round the throne;
Becauſe in him, and him alone,
Some love to Iſrael's GOD is found.
And ſoon ſhall be in Tirzah crown'd
Another king, who ſhall proceed
To vengeance for each impious deed,
And Jeroboam's houſe ſhall bleed.
Nor will ſtern juſtice ſpare the land.
Which thus reject their GOD's command;
But the ten tribes in wrath he'll ſhake,
As winds the ruſhes of the lake,
And from the land of Canaan take
Beyond Euphrates' roaring tide;
And them like duſt he'll ſcatter wide

Amongſt

Amongſt the nations, for the ſin
Which Jeroboam durſt begin.—
To Tirzah then repairs the queen,
The child a lifeleſs corpſe was ſeen:
And to provoke the impious king,
Judah's bold prince preſumes to bring
A potent army to the plains,
And ſoon a mighty victory gains.
Five hundred thouſand choſen men
To death's dark ſhade deſcended then:
The heaps of dead all Judah view'd,
And ſwift the vanquiſh'd king purſu'd.
Broken and routed in the field,
His armies fall, his cities yield:
And ſmit with ſore diſeaſe beſide,
In foul diſhonour ſoon he dy'd.

HISTORY THE THIRD.

Of the Kings of Iſrael, from the Death of Jeroboam to the Acceſſion of Ahab, the Son of Omri.

1 *Kings*, ch. xvi.

NOW number'd with the worthleſs dead,
Bold Jeroboam laid his head:
He two and twenty years had reign'd
Over the kingdom which he gain'd.
Nadab, his hapleſs ſon, ſucceeds,
And imitates his father's deeds.
Short was his reign: For at their head
To Gibbethon his troops he led:
There, as he ſtrove the town to gain,
He was by his own general ſlain.
The bold uſurper, Baaſha nam'd,
For cruelty and fierceneſs fam'd,
Slew all related to the throne,
That he might firmly fix his own.

Thus

Thus was the word of God fulfill'd,
In Jeroboam's offspring kill'd.
Nor in the leaſt reluctant proves
To idol-worſhip and the groves,
The traitor king. On Bethel's hill
The golden calf is worſhipp'd ſtill:
And that his ſubjects be conſtrain'd
To keep remote from Judah's land,
He Ramah fortified with care,
And rais'd vaſt walls and ramparts there.
This Aſa, king of Judah, ſaw,
And from the unfiniſh'd work to draw,
Prepares to Syria's king to ſend,
Whom by vaſt bribes he made his friend.
From fair Damaſcus towers he came,
And Iſrael's towns he wrapt in flame.
This Baaſha heard, and was conſtrain'd
To leave the work, to ſave his land.
Then Judah came, without delay,
And took the beams and ſtones away.

To Iſrael's king a ſeer appear'd,
And thus JEHOVAH's voice was heard:
When from the dirt, obſcure, unknown,
I rais'd thee, tyrant! to a throne,
Waſt thou ſo blind, as not to ſee
The ſins of thoſe who fell by thee!
Couldſt thou their guilt and folly blame,
And yet immediate do the ſame!
By this thou haſt incurr'd my hate,
And ſoon like their's ſhall be thy ſtate.
To ſlaughter rous'd, my ſword ſhall ſhine,
And Jeroboam's fate be thine:
And my determin'd vengeance runs
Thro' all thy kindred and thy ſons;
Who in the crowded city dies,
The dogs ſhall tear him as he lies;
Or who in fields ſhall find his fate.
Him ſhall the hungry vultures eat.

Soon

Soon dy'd the king. The crown he gain'd
By vice and treachery unreſtrain'd,
And three and twenty years he reign'd:
His memory ſtank; and ſoon his ſon,
Young Ela, ſeiz'd the vacant throne.
This king, unfit for regal ſway,
To luxury and vice gave way:
A low, ignoble, vulgar ſoul,
Born but to feaſt, and drain the bowl.
But ſoon his luckleſs empire ends,
And to the duſt his houſe deſcends.
To his own ſteward he was gueſt,
At Arza's houſe was held the feaſt.
The rank debauch the train prolong,
With noiſy mirth and drunken ſong,
There, urg'd by his ambitious aim,
The captain of the chariots came,
And fell on his defenceleſs lord,
Who dy'd by his own ſervant's ſword.

Then

Then the vile murderer ſeiz'd the throne,
And to ſecure it as his own,
He threw the flood of ſlaughter wide,
And all the king's relations dy'd:
Thus none of Baaſha's line was ſpar'd,
As late the prophet had declar'd.
While thus the throne the traitor gain'd,
At Gibbethon the troops remain'd;
Before the ramparts they ſit down,
And ardent preſs to take the town.
With great ſurprize the news they gain,
That Ela was by Zimri ſlain.
They the uſurper will not own,
But raiſe their general to the throne:
So in the camp it was decreed,
And all the troops to Tirzah ſpeed.
The royal city they inveſt,
And Zimri finds it cloſely preſt:
Then to the palace he proceeds,
And his own hand aveng'd his deeds:

The

The ſtructure ſoon his malice fires,
And in the blaze himſelf expires.
Brave Omri, ſuch the general's name,
Now to the crown advanc'd his claim.
In competition Tibni ſtands,
And brings to war his friendly bands.
His friends in battle ſtrive in vain:
Omni is crown'd, and Tibni ſlain.
Six years the king in Tirzah reign'd,
The ſeventh, Samaria's hill he gain'd.
Of Shemer he the mountain bought;
And here his regal ſeat he brought:
A royal city here he built,
Where future kings of Iſrael dwelt.
But groſs and evil were his ways,
Idols he follow'd all his days,
And every work which ſtood abhorr'd
By all good men, and by the LORD.
His government was Iſrael's curſe,
And on he drove from bad to worſe,

Till heavenly vengeance claim'd his breath,
And laid the monarch low in death.

HISTORY THE FOURTH.

The idolatrous and wicked Reign of King Ahab. The Wickedneſs and Death of Jezebel, his Queen. The Reigns of his Sons, Ahaziah and Joram: And the Extirpation of his Family by Jehu.

1 *Kings*, ch. xvi. *to the End.*——2 *Chron.* ch. i. ix. x.

OMRI twelve years the ſceptre ſway'd;
And when in duſt his head was laid,
Ahab, his proud and impious ſon,
In peace ſucceeded to the throne.
Perverſe and evil was his reign,
And each deteſted vice his ſtain:
For all his predeceſſors deeds
His wickedneſs by far exceeds.

Too

Too little to his thought appear'd
The idol gods already rear'd;
He from the impious Tyrian ſhore
A ſoft Zidonian princeſs bore;
Whoſe gods are ſoon in Iſrael ſeen,
And ſwarms of prieſts attend the queen.
Then rais'd on high old Baal ſtands,
His mimic thunder in his hands:
And all the power of art adorns
Aſhtrate with her ſilver horns.
From Tiſhbe, 'croſs great Jordan's ſtream,
Sent by the LORD, a prophet came;
Elijah was the good man's name.
Sure as GOD lives, O king, he cries,
He'll ſtop the ſluices of the ſkies;
And Iſrael's plains no more ſhall view
For three full years or rain or dew.—
The event ſucceeds; the mournful ſwain
Tills the rich lands, and ſows in vain;

Loſt are the labours of the year,
And parch'd the duſty plains appear.
Three years the drought conſum'd the lands;
Before the king the prophet ſtands;
And tells him plain that Iſrael's woes
From his idolatry have roſe.
But let, ſaid he, with angry eyes,
Baal's eight hundred prophets riſe,
To Carmel's ſtately mountain ſide,
And let the cauſe be fairly try'd:
Myſelf on Iſrael's GOD will call,
And boldly there confront them all.—
Sent by the king, the prophets came,
But could not make their altar flame;
All day they try. Elijah prays,
And all the altars round him blaze:
The people on their faces lie,
The LORD! the LORD is GOD, they cry!—
If ſo, to juſtice then proceed,
And let the bold ſeducers bleed.—

So ſpake the fire. The people hear,
And take the impious prophets near
Smooth Kiſhon's ſtream, and ſlay them there.
Then to the king the prophet cries,
The LORD accepts the ſacrifice:
And now the thirſty land ſhall gain
The long-deſired ſhowers of rain.
Riſe, eat and drink, and go thy way!—
The prophet's word the clouds obey.
The rains deſcend at Heaven's command,
And ſhowers refreſh the thirſty land.
But ſoon the monarch tells his queen
What he had late at Carmel ſeen;
How, ſlain on Kiſhon's winding ſhore,
All Baal's prophets are no more.
Fierce Jezebel at once decreed
The holy man of GOD to bleed:
And lets him know that not a day
Her cruel vengeance will delay

To vindicate her idol's cauſe.
To ſave his life the ſeer withdraws.
Now in bright arms full thirty kings
The monarch of Damaſcus brings.
The neighing ſteed, the rattling car,
Shine in the pomp and pride of war;
Bright helmets, ſpears, and ſhining ſhields,
Flaſh dreadful over all the fields;
Vaſt warlike lines the forces fill,
And compaſs round Samaria's hill.
With inſolence and ſcornful pride,
Benhadad Iſrael's king defy'd.
Ahab refuſes to oppoſe.
In his demand the monarch grows.
The king rejects the ſecond claim;
And to his walls the forces came:
In wrath the Syrian monarch curſt,
And ſwore he'd blow him up like duſt.
To Iſrael's king a prophet came,
And told him in JEHOVAH's name,

That

That all Benhadad's warlike pride
That very day ſhould be deſtroy'd.
And that the ſtupid tribes may know
It is the LORD that ſtrikes the blow,
This mighty vaunting army ſhall
By the young princes proweſs fall
Unſkill'd in arms, in war unknown,
They ſhall, with vigour not their own,
Break thro' Benhadad's thick array,
And victory ſhall crown the day:
Thyſelf the battle ſhall command.—
The king unactive will not ſtand:
He arms the youths, and ſoon elate
They boldly ſally from the gate.
The Syrians wonder'd what they meant:
But ſoon arrives the great event.
Take them alive, Benhadad cries!
But all his army from them flies;
When Iſrael the advantakes takes,
And a prodigious ſlaughter makes.

The Syrian prieſts and prophets ſtrive
The reaſon of this rout to give.
The God of Iſrael, they declare,
Rules the high mountains, and the air;
Our rural god delighted roves
Thro' the fair vallies and the groves:
No wonder then we're put to flight,
When on the lofty hills we fight:
But ſhould we meet them on the plain,
No doubt we ſhall the victory gain.—
The monarch well approv'd the thought,
And ſoon another army brought.

To Iſrael's king approach'd a ſeer:
The Lord, he ſaid, will make appear
That he is monarch of the plains,
Nor ſhelter'd vale his power reſtrains:
Riſe to the fight! arm, arm with ſpeed!
To thee the victory is decreed.—

Then to the war the monarch drew
All Iſrael's forces, weak and few;

Like

Like two ſmall flocks of kids they ſtand,
The Syrians ſpread o'er all the land.
Seven days the armies keep in ſight,
The eighth beholds the dreadful fight.
The Syrians fall; and all around
An hundred thouſand preſs'd the ground:
The thin remains to Aphek fled,
And ſoon were number'd with the dead.
Beneath thoſe walls they hop'd would ſave,
Near thirty thouſand found a grave.
Abject and mean, the Syrian chief,
In all the bitterneſs of grief,
Seeing his mighty army loſt,
And empty now his impious boaſt,
To Iſrael's king preſents his prayer,
And begs the prince his life to ſpare.
Ahab is glad to hear he lives,
And all he aſks directly gives:
Reſtores his crown without delay,
And ſends the king in peace away.

To Iſrael's king a prophet cries,
With anger flaſhing in his eyes,
Since thou to diſobey haſt dar'd,
And the abhorr'd blaſphemer ſpar'd,
Thy life for his I ſhall require;
For his thy people ſhall expire:
So ſaith the LORD.—When full of cares
The king to his own houſe repairs.

In Jezreel's vale of ancient fame,
A city ſtood, alike in name:
Here Iſrael's king oft kept his court;
And here his ſervile train reſort.
Cloſe by the royal palace ſide
A piece of land the monarch ſpy'd,
Which for a garden he deſir'd,
And of the owner ſoon requir'd.
Naboth, the maſter of the land,
Boldly rejects the king's demand;
Nor will yield up, on any claim,
The lands which from his fathers came.

The king in ſullen diſcontent
Soon to the palace murmuring went;
And full of gloomy care is ſeen
By Jezebel his haughty queen.
The cauſe ſhe learns. A king, ſhe cry'd,
And by a ſubject be deny'd!
Caſt off all care, thou ſoon ſhalt ſee
Thy wiſh fulfill'd: Leave that to me!—
She letters wrote in Ahab's name,
And with his ſignet ſeal'd the ſame.
To Jezreel's elders theſe ſhe ſent,
Which ſoon explain'd the dire intent:
There for a faſt ſhe gave command,
As from great crimes to purge the land;
Then bids them Naboth ſet on high,
And find two men to teſtify
That he blaſphem'd GOD and the king:
And him to execution bring.
With this the elders ſoon comply'd,
And innocent poor Naboth dy'd.

His ſons his innocence declar'd,
And ſoon their father's fate they ſhar'd:
The elders to the queen convey'd
The tidings that ſhe was obey'd.
Exulting, to the king ſhe ſaid,
Have you not heard that Naboth's dead!
Accus'd of treaſon dy'd the clown;
His lands are forfeit to the crown;
Vile wretch! that durſt his king oppoſe.—
To take poſſeſſion Ahab goes:
Elijah meets him on the ground.
My worſt of foes! and am I found!
Exclaim'd the king.—Replies the ſeer,
By Heaven's command I meet thee here.
For Naboth's blood, unjuſtly ſhed,
Black vengeance hovers o'er thy head:
I ſee the day of evil nigh,
Which will thy wicked houſe deſtroy.
Thy blood the dogs ſhall lick: Thy queen
Shall in her pride not long be ſeen:

For close by Jezreel's guilty wall
The hungry dogs shall eat her all.—
The monarch heard, he fasts and prays,
And heaven his punishment delays.
'Midst Gilead hills, well known to fame,
Fair Ramoth stood; beyond the stream
Of swelling Jordan. Levi's seed,
To whom this city was decreed,
No longer now the town retain'd,
Which had by Syria's king been gain'd.
This to re-take was Ahab's care,
And for the siege his troops prepare.
While they the just provision made,
Jehoshaphat a visit paid;
Whom Israel's king intreats to share
The honours and the spoils of war.
The king consents; but yet desir'd
The will of God might be enquir'd.
Then close before Samaria's gate
The monarchs sat on thrones of state;

Four hundred frantic prophets play'd
Before them their wild pranks, and ſaid,
To Ramoth-Gilead boldly go,
For GOD will lay the Syrians low.—
Mad Zedekiah, 'midſt the roar,
Puſh'd with the iron horns he wore:
Thus ſhall our warlike prince, he cry'd,
The Syrians puſh till they're deſtroy'd.—
The king of Judah then implor'd
To aſk ſome prophet of the LORD.
Ahab declar'd, 'One ſuch I know,
But hate him as my mortal foe.—
Let not my brother king ſay ſo,
But fetch the prophet; ſoon reply'd
The pious prince; and be it try'd.—
Micajah came at the command,
But gave the kings to underſtand
That it to Ahab was decreed
At Ramoth-Gilead's walls to bleed.

Ahab

Ahab confines the ſacred ſeer,
And ſtands determin'd to go there:
The city he attempts in vain;
And by a random ſhot is ſlain.
Long in the field the pain he bore,
After the ſhaft his boſom tore.
Copious he bled, but ſtill remain'd,
And the warm ſtream his chariot ſtain'd:
They waſh'd it in Samaria's flood,
And there the dogs lick'd up his blood.
Then Ahaziah, Ahab's ſon,
Succeeded to the vacant throne.
He follow'd all his father's ways,
And few and evil were his days.
He with weak hand the ſceptre held;
And Moab in his reign rebell'd:
While the fierce winds and roaring tide
On Elam's rock his fleet deſtroy'd.
As gazing careleſs o'er the walls,
He from his ſtately palace falls;

Much bruis'd, with pain he draws his breath,
And fears his hurt will end in death:
But anxious to explore his fate,
He ſends his ſervants with great ſtate
To Baal-zebub's impious fane,
To aſk if yet he health may gain.
Elijah met them in the way;
Go to your maſter, and thus ſay,
In haſte he cry'd, O'er Iſrael's plains
Is there no God that lives and reigns!
And things to come preciſely knows,
That thus your train to Ekron goes.
You need not on your way proceed,
For to your maſter 'tis decreed
That from his bed he ſhall not riſe,
For as God lives he ſurely dies!—
In ſilent woe the train returns,
And the ſick king the meſſage learns.
What ſort of man, he bids them ſay,
Was he that met you in the way?

Rude

Rude was his dreſs, and rough his beard;
O'er all his limbs the hair appear'd;
A leathern girdle girt his loins;
The ſervants ſaid.—The king rejoins,
It is the Tiſhbite: Fetch him here,
And who dies firſt ſhall ſoon appear.—
Then fifty men aſcend a hill,
To bring the prophet to his will:
But all the ſkies around them blaze,
Which low in death each warrior lays.
Still fifty more the monarch ſends,
But thoſe by lightning found their ends.
The king enrag'd, will ſend again:
The captain in ſubmiſſive ſtrain
Accoſts the hoary ſire with prayer,
And begs the man of GOD to ſpare.
The humble train the prophet ſpar'd:
To him the voice of GOD was heard.
Be not afraid, but boldly go,
And let the impious monarch know

His ſpeedy end.—The ſeer comply'd,
And ſoon the king of Iſrael dy'd.
As Ahaziah had no ſon,
Joram his brother fill'd the throne.
His reign was evil, but proceeds
Not wholly like his brother's deeds;
Old Baal he regarded leſs,
Yet ſtill with idols would tranſgreſs.
This monarch rais'd his early view
Revolted Moab to ſubdue.
An hundred thouſand ſporting lambs,
Like number of large well-fed rams,
The king of Moab annual brought,
And friendſhip thus with Iſrael bought:
But in the former reign rebell'd,
And the vaſt fleecy train with-held.
Againſt him Joram takes the field,
By powerful war to make him yield.
To Judah's pious prince he ſends,
With whom his family was friends.

Jehoſhaphat

Jehoſhaphat with willing mind
His warlike troops with Joram join'd.
Thro' Edom's wild each army goes;
The king of Edom with them roſe.
Three kings, each at his army's head,
Their troops wide o'er the deſert ſpread:
Seven days they march; but water fails,
And thirſt thro' all the land prevails.
The king of Judah gave the word
To ſeek ſome prophet of the LORD:
They ſearch, and find Eliſha there,
And to the kings they bring the ſeer.
To them the man of GOD thus ſpake:
'Tis for the king of Judah's ſake
Alone, that I regard your prayer;
But bring with ſpeed a minſtrel here.—
The minſtrel came, and, while he play'd,
In rapture thus the prophet ſaid:
Dig trenches 'croſs the deſert land,
And full of water they ſhall ſtand.—

The troops regard the Sovereign will,
And copious ſtreams the trenches fill.
The king of Moab heard from far
The rumour of approaching war;
And to evade the intended blow,
Prepares in arms to meet the foe.
His ardent youth in armour ſhine,
And with long ranks the frontiers line.
Now roſe the ſun with fiery gleam,
Whoſe rays reflected from the ſtream
Shone red as blood. No water there
Could be imagin'd to appear;
So dry the deſert. With ſurprize,
The army ſoon exulting cries;
The kings have quarrell'd on the plains;
To Moab now no foe remains!
Behold their blood! Ye armies, riſe,
The plunder now before you lies!—
An haſty march the armies make,
But ſoon perceive their ſad miſtake;

A warm

A warm reception find, and all,
In wild confuſion, flee or fall.
The victor hoſts ſpread far and wide;
And ſoon all Moab was deſtroy'd.

Tho' he ſo great a victory gain'd,
Not long in peace the king remain'd.
Benhadad, whom his father ſpar'd,
Now to invade the land prepar'd;
But whereſoe'er his troops appear,
The king had knowledge from the ſeer.
The Syrian king was much diſmay'd,
And thinks his counſels are betray'd.
His ſervants the diſcovery make,
And he the prophet ſtrives to take:
The prophet ſtrikes the warriors blind,
And leads them where he is inclin'd;
So that, by ill ſucceſs conſtrain'd,
The baffled armies leave the land.

But the vex'd king with rancour burns,
And ſoon with greater force returns.

His potent armies then ſit down
In order, round the royal town
Of fair Samaria. Famine reigns,
The city no ptoviſion gains:
Women their children kill and dreſs,
The rage of hunger to ſuppreſs;
And nobles, while the poor lie dead,
Buy at vaſt price an aſs's head.
Becauſe the prophet's prayers he knows
Could ſoon redreſs Samaria's woes,
The king in ſackcloth will appear,
And ſends in wrath to kill the ſeer.
The prophet reads the rolls of fate,
And tells him, In Samaria's gate
To-morrow Iſrael will behold
Fine wheaten flour and barley ſold
At loweſt price.—A lord replies,
If God ſhould rain them from the ſkies,
This might be true.—'Tis doom'd to thee
This plenty with thine eyes to ſee,

Replies

Replies the ſeer; but not to taſte.—
When night her ſable veil had caſt
O'er all the hills and plains around,
The Syrians heard a rattling ſound
Of horſe and chariots rolling near,
Which gathering beats upon the ear.
They wildly ſtare with dread ſurprize:
Each captain to his fellow cries,
Hark! Iſrael's king to battle brings
Againſt us various mighty kings,
Which will ſurprize us in the night.—
At once the armies take their flight
In wild confuſion and diſmay,
And throw in haſte their cloaths away.
Mean-while before Samaria's gate
Three leprous men in ſadneſs ſat:
Why ſit we drooping thus! each cries,
Till every one with famine dies?
Let's to the Syrians go; and there
We ſhall have plenty if they ſpare:

But if they in their rage deſtroy,
We know the worſt; we can but die.—
Then to the adverſe lines they go;
But fled in darkneſs was the foe:
In order all the works appear,
And tents; but not a ſoul was there.
Then to a ſumptuous tent they make,
And of a rich repaſt partake.
With food in plenty thus ſupply'd,
They ſilver, gold, and raiment, hide:
Then to the city gate they go,
And give the waking guards to know
That Syria's troops had left the plains,
And in the camp not one remains.
King Joram riſes in the night,
But apprehends the Syrian's flight
Is but a feint to draw them out:
And if they follow, 'tis his doubt
That they in rage will ſoon return,
His people ſlay, his city burn.

His

His ſervants earneſt beg, that he
Will ſend a meſſenger to ſee.
He ſends; and ſoon appears in ſight
The Syrian's fear, and haſty flight.
Then from the town with ſhouts of joy
He pours; his ſervants ſoon deſtroy
The tents; and ſuch vaſt plunder make,
That at the price the prophet ſpake
Fine flour was ſold. The haughty lord
That diſbeliev'd the prophet's word,
Trod down before the city gate,
Amidſt the tumult found his fate
But now the Ruler of the Skies
In righteous wrath prepares to riſe;
And ſwift on Ahab's impious ſons
The long-denounced vengeance runs.
To Ramoth, where his father bled,
Bold Joram his choice warriors led.
With conquering arms the town he gain'd;
Only the citadel remain'd.

The king, being wounded while he fought,
Was to his own phyſicians brought
At Jezreel. While he tarried there,
His general carried on the war:
To him, while thus for fame he fought,
An horn of oil a prophet brought,
Which inſtant pouring on his head,
He to the wondering warrior ſaid;
A meſſage from the LORD I bring,
And thus anoint bold Jehu king:
Thou art the man by Heaven decreed
To extirpate all Ahab's ſeed:
Then ſpare them not.—He ſaid, and fled.
The army learning what he ſaid,
Their ready vows to Jehu bring,
And in the camp proclaim him king.
Of this not one in Jezreel knows;
There ſoon the new-made monarch goes.
The watchman from the tower beheld
His party trace the duſty field.

Joram twice ſent to meet the train,
With them his meſſengers remain.
In doubtful haſte he mounts his car,
And comes to ſee if peace or war:
With him he Judah's monarch brings;
Each in his chariot rode the kings.
The parties met on Naboth's ground,
And Joram on his general frown'd.
How, Jehu! is it peace? he cry'd:—
What peace! the warrior ſtern reply'd:
Can peace, or truth, or juſtice, dwell
With Joram and with Jezebel!—
There's treachery!—then the monarch ſaid,
And inſtant turn'd his car and fled.
Then his ſtrong bow the hero drew,
The ſhaft with ſudden vengeance flew,
Struck the king's back, and pierc'd him thro'.
Then he commands, ere they proceed,
To throw him down, and let him bleed

On Naboth's ground; and thus fulfil
The God of Iſrael's righteous will.
While impious Joram thus lay dead,
The king of Judah from them fled:
Haſte, haſte and ſmite him, Jehu cries;
They ſmite, and Ahaziah dies.
To Jezreel then bold Jehu drives;
The courtiers tremble for their lives:
But Jezebel, with haughty mien,
Was at her palace window ſeen.
Her face was painted; bare her breaſt,
And in high taſte her hair was dreſt.
As he approach'd, this was her word:
Had Zimri peace, who ſlew his lord!—
Who's on my ſide? the hero cries,—
Three eunuchs in the room he ſpies:
Down with her from the window's height:—
They in the willing taſk unite.
Her blood was ſprinkled on the wall;
The citizens beheld her fall.

Then

Then in the palace he, in haſte,
Takes with his guards a ſmall repaſt.
Go out, he cries, inter the queen,
Let not her curſed face be ſeen;
She's daughter to a king.—They go,
And Heaven's juſt vengeance wond'ring know:
The dogs had eat her, there remains
Only her head, and feet, and hands.
Now at Samaria's royal town,
Nearly related to the crown,
Dwelt ſeventy princes. Jehu ſends,
And to the townſmen's choice commends
To take the moſt deſerving ſon,
And place him on his father's throne;
And for their king and country fight.
The trembling rulers ſoon unite
In their ſubjection; and all ſay,
Do thou command, and we obey.—
To them his ſecond letter runs,
Then kill your maſter's ſeventy ſons;

Let me you all at Jezreel see,
To-morrow, bring their heads to me.—
The rulers his command obey'd,
And in two heaps the heads were laid.

HISTORY THE FIFTH.

The Continuation of the History of the Kings of Israel, from the Accession of Jehu, to the Captivity of the Ten Tribes.

2 *Kings*, ch. x. xiii. xv. xvii—2 *Chron.* ch. xxv. xxvi. xxviii.

THEN Jehu drives his foaming steeds,
And to Samaria proceeds:
When chanc'd to meet him in the face
Full forty princes, of the race
Of royal Judah. These he slew,
And then his train their way pursue.

When

When to the capital they came,
He ſpreads the terror of his name;
On Ahab's ſeed like lightning flies,
And all the royal offſpring dies.
Determin'd then an end to make
Of Baal's worſhip, thus he ſpake:
Ye men of Iſrael, hear my voice,
And in my firm reſolve rejoice.
Ahab appear'd at Baal's ſhrine,
But greater worſhip ſhall be mine:
A ſacrifice I have to make,
Of which the nation ſhall partake.
With ſpeed proclaim it thro' the land,
And bring to honour my command
His prophets, prieſts, and all his train;
Whoe'er is wanting ſhall be ſlain!—
A ſolemn feaſt they then proclaim,
And Baal's prieſts and prophets came;
With all who in his worſhip ſkill,
And in vaſt crowds the temple fill.

The monarch ſaw, and gave the word
That all the ſervants of the LORD
Should quit the place without delay,
And none but Baal's votaries ſtay.
To ſacrifice they ſoon proceed,
The altars flame, the victims bleed.
The king in ſhew the worſhip joins,
And every eye with tranſport ſhines.
But at the door the monarch then
Planted a band of armed men,
Who heard the king ſtrict orders give
That none within the houſe ſhould live.
The warriors take him at his word,
And put the votaries to the ſword:
The prophets, prieſts, and all the train,
In one promiſcuous heap lie ſlain.
Old Baal, heaven's romantic fire,
Now hides his thunder in the mire,
His altars with his ſtatue fall,
And one wide flame devours them all.

The monarch's zeal the LORD commends,
And a ſure promiſe to him ſends,
That for the good to Iſrael done,
He and his race ſhall hold the throne
Four generations. But the king,
Remiſs and careleſs, fail'd to bring
To Iſrael's God his ardent vows,
And ſtill the golden calves allows.
For this, and every other ſtain,
Long tedious wars diſturb his reign;
And Syria's king with conquering hand
Smites every corner of the land.
Full eight and twenty years he reign'd,
But neither wealth nor honour gain'd.
His ſon Jehohaz then ſucceeds,
Renown'd for no important deeds.
Still by the Syrians ſore diſtreſt,
The band of Iſrael found no reſt.
He only one ſmall battle gain'd,
And Iſrael low in duſt remain'd.

To Heaven he then preſents his prayer;
The pitying God conſents to ſpare.
Joaſh his ſon to war proceeds,
And ſav'd the land by noble deeds.
Full ſeventeen years the father reign'd,
Brave Joaſh then the ſceptre gain'd.
Two years before his father dy'd
(As all the grateful land apply'd
To have him crown'd) he king was made,
And jointly with his father ſway'd:
But evil he his reign begins,
And loves his predeceſſor's ſins.
Eliſha on his death-bed lies;
'Twas told the king, The prophet dies:
He pays a viſit to the ſeer,
And Iſrael's tribes in grief appear.
Bring me a bow, the prophet ſays.
A bow was brought: His hand he lays
Upon the king's. Now ſhoot, he cries:
Towards the eaſt the arrow flies.

Thus

Thus flies the vengeance of the LORD,
Rejoin'd the ſeer; and 'tis his word
That thou the Syrians ſhalt confound,
And ſmite the nation to the ground:
Take up the arrows then, and ſtrike!—
Thrice ſtruck the king. With much diſlike
The prophet cry'd, Why haſt thou ſtay'd?
The Syrians had in duſt been laid
If thou hadſt follow'd on the blow;
Now only three defeats they'll know.—
The prophet dy'd. The king prepares
With ſpeed to carry on his wars.
Three times he made the Syrians yield,
And drove their armies from the field;
Spread terror thro' their vanquiſh'd hoſt,
And gain'd the towns his father loſt.
The king that ſat on Judah's throne
Had laurels late from Edom won;
And he demands, in haughty ſtrain,
Joaſh to meet him on the plain.

The king of Iſrael would adviſe
Bold Ahaziah to be wiſe.
But he perſiſts. Their armies fight,
And Judah's ſons are put to flight:
The challenger is captive made;
Low in the duſt his army laid:
And Iſrael's king he durſt provoke
With vigour carries on the ſtroke;
And on Jeruſalem he falls,
Plunders the city, breaks the walls,
Takes a vaſt booty from his foes,
And to his land in triumph goes.
He ſixteen years the ſceptre ſway'd,
Then Jeroboam king was made,
The ſon of Joaſh. Forty years
On Iſrael's throne this chief appears:
But only evil were his deeds,
And flagrant vice to vice ſucceeds;
But yet, ſucceſsful in his wars,
His drooping country's head he rears.

The conquer'd lands his force regains,
And to the eaſtern ſea he reigns:
But folly, luxury and pride,
The honour of his reign deſtroy'd.
Amos the ſeer to Bethel goes,
And propheſys prodigious woes.
The prieſt of Bethel, proud and vain,
Boldly forbids the heavenly ſtrain:
The prophet's words he will not hear,
But to the king accus'd the ſeer;
By whom the man of God's conſtrain'd
To leave the city and the land.
After his death a ſon ſucceeds,
Much like his father in his deeds,
Nam'd Zacariah. Weak his ſway,
And ſhort and evil was his day.
Six months the crown his brows ſuſtain,
And then he was by Shallum ſlain.
Short was the time the traitor ſway'd,
And ſoon his treachery was repaid;

For

For he, before the month went round,
Like meaſure from Menahem found.
This general of the murder'd king,
At Thirza hearing of the thing,
Soon laid the vile uſurper dead,
And rul'd the kingdom in his ſtead.

Ten tedious years this monarch reign'd,
With every vice his throne was ſtain'd;
Each town which ſcorn'd his wicked reign,
He ſoak'd in blood, and wrapp'd in flame:
His horrid cruelty and rage
Purſu'd alike each ſex and age.
An heavy tax on all he lays,
A vaſt enormous ſum to raiſe.
With this he bribes the Syrian king
An army on his ſide to bring,
And fix his throne. But ſoon he dy'd;
And Pekahiah then ſupply'd
His father's place. Short was his reign,
For he was by his general ſlain.

An

And Pekah (ſuch the general's name)
The king of Iſrael then became:
And tho' his throne was rear'd in blood,
Full twenty cruel years it ſtood.
The Aſſyrian king diſturb'd his reign,
Whoſe armies various cities gain,
And provinces; vaſt ſpoil he makes,
And captives to Aſſyria takes.
But Pekah againſt Judah turns,
And all the rage of battle burns.
An hundred thouſand warriors ſlain,
Preſs'd in vaſt heaps the groaning plain;
And to Samaria, with a train
Of captives twice that number, goes
The king of Iſrael, o'er his foes
Triumphing. But an holy ſeer
E'er their arrival had been there,
And told them, in JEHOVAH's name,
That all the captives when they came

Muſt

Muſt be releas'd. Oppreſs'd with fear,
The town oppos'd their coming there.
The elders riſe: The king comply'd,
And the vaſt train with food ſupply'd,
Cloathed the naked of their band,
And ſent them to their native land.

Soon an advantage Hoſhea gain'd,
Uſurping ſlew the king, and reign'd.
But Iſrael now was feeble grown,
And oft was ſhook the tottering throne.
Now nineteen kings the ſceptre held
Since Jeroboam firſt rebell'd:
The golden calves, the horrid ſin
Which that vile monarch durſt begin,
Thro' every reign had held their place,
And were the curſe of all the race.

Two hundred years the LORD had ſtay'd,
And threat'ned vengeance was delay'd.
The ſtupid tribes no warning take,
But will their fathers GOD forſake;

Each

Each horrid impious deed allow,
And will to every idol bow:
Prieſts, temples, idols, altars, groves,
And rites obſcene, the nation loves;
And the whole motley heathen train,
By turns, their fickle favour gain:
For which their God in wrath proceeds
To recompence their evil deeds:
And the ten kindred tribes we find
Scatter'd like chaff before the wind;
Spread all the heathen nations o'er;
And Iſrael's name is now no more.

The kingdom had been ſubject made,
And to Aſſyria tribute paid.
Hoſhea 'gainſt the king rebell'd:
Him ſoon th' Aſſyrian monarch quell'd,
Who like a conflagration came,
And all the country wrapp'd in flame.
Three years his armies then ſat down
Before Samaria's royal town;

Then all his force he on them turns,
The ſtarving city takes, and burns;
The walls throws down, the warriors ſlays,
And all in one wide ruin lays:
With rage and cruelty unreſtrain'd,
He of the natives ſtrips the land;
Spreads them abroad from ſhore to ſhore,
And thither they return no more.
Then, with increaſing power and pride,
The monarch Iſrael's land ſupply'd
With various diſtant tribes that came
Beyond Euphrates' roaring ſtream.
They of the LORD no knowledge gain,
And numbers are by lions ſlain.
Taught by a prieſt, to worſhip GOD,
A ſtrange religious path they trod:
Their ancient cuſtoms ſtill remain'd,
And idols ſpread o'er all the land.
Hence the Samaritans aroſe,
Which to the Jews were always foes.

HISTORY THE SIXTH.

Of the Kings of Judah, from the Death of Solomon to the Acceſſion of Jehoſhaphat.

2 *Chron.* ch. xi. *to* xvi.

WHEN Rehoboam's rough replies
Had made him odious in the eyes
Of Iſrael's tribes; and when in vain
He ſtrove their favour to regain;
When inſtant death Hadoram found,
And growing clamours ſhook the ground;
The ſon of Solomon then ſaw
It neceſſary to withdraw.
When to his capital he came,
His youthful heart was all on flame;
For their affront, and foul abuſe,
He ſeeks the rebels to reduce
By force of arms. Firm in his cauſe,
Judah's ſtrong tribe its warriors draws;

And Benjamin's. In armour then
Two hundred thousand chosen men
Stood ready to assert his right,
And in their monarch's cause to fight:
But from the LORD a prophet came,
Who bid them check their martial flame;
For Heaven's High Ruler had decreed
To rend these tribes from David's seed.
The listening tribes revere the sky,
And lay their shining armour by.

Then to the king the cares belong
To make his infant kingdom strong.
The frontier towns he fortifies;
Vast works, and walls, and ramparts rise;
Great store of arms he lays up there,
And all the implements of war.

As Jeroboam thro' his land
The worship of the LORD restrain'd;
And thinking thus to fix his throne,
Made priests and idols of his own;

The pious Levite, full of care,
To Zion's towers in crowds repair,
And join the temple-worship there.
Three years the king of Judah trod
The paths of truth, and serv'd his GOD;
Then stupid to dumb idols turns,
And on their altars incense burns:
On every mount he planted groves,
And each abomination loves.

To make his just displeasure known,
For this JEHOVAH shakes his throne:
For from the Nile's resounding stream
The Egyptian king against him came;
And Ethiopia's sun-burnt ground
Her tawny warriors pours around:
Their swarthy hosts o'erspread the plain
And soon the frontier towns they gain.
Then for Jerusalem they make,
The treasures of the temple take,

And

And the king's houſe. Vaſt plunder gain'd;
They then in triumph left the land.
The humbled tribes their folly learn,
And to their father's God return:
The God in mercy hears their prayers,
And the repenting nation ſpares.
Full eighteen years on Judah's throne
Sat the great ſon of Solomon:
His wives were many, and his race
In every city found a place.
With Jeroboam while he reign'd
A ceaſeleſs war his ſword maintain'd:
And to his crown and martial deeds
His ſon Abijah next ſucceeds.
Fix'd on his throne, this prince prepares
To carry on his father's wars:
Four hundred thouſand men he rais'd,
Their helmets flaſh'd, their banners blaz'd;
Conſpicuous on mount Ephraim's height;
And when the foe appear'd in ſight

The

The upbraiding king before them lays
Their foul revolt, and all their ways.
But Jeroboam while he ſpake
A mean advantage ſtrives to take,
And ſeeks his army to confound,
That he might beat them to the ground.
The men of Judah lift their eyes
To the Great Ruler of the Skies:
And while the prieſts their trumpets blow,
They fall with fury on the foe.
In their defence the LORD appears,
And fills the adverſe troops with fears.
Them the bold men of Judah ſmite,
And put the numerous hoſt to flight.
Five hundred thouſand warriors ſlain
Preſs'd in vaſt heaps the purple plain.
Abijah follows on the blow,
And lays the impious nation low;
Spreads war and terror thro' their land,
And various cities ſoon regain'd.

Three proſperous years he held the ſway;
Tho' ſhort, yet glorious was his day;
He dy'd in honour. To his throne
Aſa, his brave and pious ſon,
In peace ſucceeded. Forty years
On Judah's throne this king appears:
With faithful heart he ſerv'd the LORD,
His temple lov'd, and kept his word.
The firſt ten years he held command
Fair peace and plenty bleſs'd his land.
Theſe proſperous days the prince employs
To make JEHOVAH's glory riſe;
And where extends his wide command,
He purges idols from the land;
Cuts down their groves, their ſtatues burns,
And all their altars overturns.
He by example, and by word,
Inforc'd the worſhip of the LORD:

With

With pious and with prudent care
Attends to every great affair,
And tho' in peace prepares for war.
From Ethiopia's ſun-burnt ſoil,
Where thro' vaſt regions runs the Nile,
Huge ſwarthy crowds of warriors riſe,
Whoſe monarch Judah's king defies:
Their army like a deluge gains,
And ſpreading blackens all the plains.
Bold Aſa meets them undiſmay'd,
And to his father's God he pray'd:
The favouring God his terrors rolls,
And chills the tawny warriors ſouls:
They flee like chaff before the wind,
And leave their ſumptuous camp behind.
The victor hoſt vaſt plunder makes,
And various towns and cities takes;
Then back in all the pomp of war,
With ſpoils of nations from afar,

They to Jeruſalem return,
And on God's altar incenſe burn.
Seven hundred oxen were decreed,
With thoſe ſeven thouſand ſheep, to bleed:
With grateful heart they ſacrifice,
And praiſe the God that rules the ſkies.

The men of Iſrael having heard
How God for Aſa had appear'd;
Struck with the glories of his reign,
And hoping better days to gain,
In crowds leave bloody Baaſha's ſway,
And ſoon to Zion take their way.
Baaſha, enrag'd, built Ramah then,
And with a band of armed men
Strove the revolters to reſtrain.
Aſa to make his labour vain
Vaſt preſents ſends to Syria's king.
Theſe bribes the willing armies bring
From fair Damaſcus; by whoſe aid
The works are ſoon in ruin laid.

The aid which Aſa had implor'd
Of Syria's king, diſpleas'd the LORD.
A ſeer reproves him for the deed;
But him the raging king decreed
To a dark dungeon, and to chains,
And there the man of GOD remains.
His ſervant's wrong the LORD ſurveys,
And ſmites the king with dire diſeaſe:
To the phyſicians he apply'd;
But ſoon without relief he dy'd.
A funeral pile his ſubjects raiſe,
And while it burns reſound his praiſe.

HISTORY THE SEVENTH.

The Kings of Judah continued, from the Acceſſion of Jehoſhaphat, to the Death of Athaliah.

2 *Chron.* ch. xvii. *to* xxiii.

AND now on Judah's riſing throne
Jehoſhaphat in glory ſhone,
The ſon of Aſa. To the Lord
True was his heart, and by his word
He fram'd his conduct: Hence he roſe
To glory: Over all his foes
He ſtood victorious; for his GOD
While he the paths of honour trod,
Would ne'er forſake him. Thro' the land,
By the good monarch's wiſe command,
The Levites GOD's high law explain'd;
And made the awful words rever'd,
Their fathers once from Sinai heard.

The

The king, the favourite of the ſkies,
Made peace, and truth, and juſtice riſe:
They with their ſtrength his throne ſuſtain,
And with their glories crown his reign.
Far as in monarch's power it lies,
He taught the nation to be wiſe;
Sent judges over all his coaſts,
And ſerv'd with zeal the LORD of Hoſts.
Where idol, or where grove remains,
Or on the mountain, or the plains,
The careful monarch gave command
Of the dire train to purge the land.
By this he firmly fix'd his throne,
And with increaſing glory ſhone:
On him high honours GOD beſtow'd,
And from all quarters riches flow'd:
He by all nations ſtood rever'd,
His love was ſought, his anger fear'd.
But evils and great dangers ſpring
From his raſh league with Iſrael's king;

For

For he on Ramoth's hoſtile plain
Was on the brink of being ſlain.
When to his land he ſafe return'd,
The folly of his war he mourn'd:
True to his father's GOD he ſtood,
And ſpent his days in doing good.
The pious monarch to annoy,
And his increaſing fame deſtroy,
The Moabites with Ammon join,
And in the field their armies ſhine.
The king with holy fervour pray'd;
His GOD attends, and gives him aid.
Fearleſs he marches to the foe,
The ſingers ſing, the trumpets blow:
But ere the edge of battle joins,
Strange madneſs ſeiz'd the adverſe lines:
By their own ſwords the warriors bleed;
Iſrael with wonder marks the deed;
Then takes the plunder while they fall,
And wide deſtruction whelms them all.

Yet one miſtake the monarch made,
For which offence he dearly paid.
With Iſrael's king his fleet he join'd;
His ſhips were daſh'd by driving wind
Againſt the rocks, and all deſtroy'd.
Soon after this miſchance he dy'd.
He five and twenty years had reign'd,
And then his ſon the ſceptre gain'd.

Jehoram was the prince's name,
But only evil was his aim;
Low, baſe, and full of envious ire;
Ah, how unworthy ſuch a ſire!
As ſoon as ſettled on his throne,
He made his brutal fury known;
He like a bloody tyger flew,
And all his royal brethren ſlew.

When, rais'd on cruelty and blood,
His tottering throne but feebly ſtood,
From Omri's race he fetch'd a bride,
And ſtood to Iſrael's king ally'd.

With

With evil thus his reign begins,
And all the houſe of Ahab's ſins.
To this diſtreſſes ſoon ſucceed,
And Edom from his yoke was freed:
And to the monarch, from the ſkies,
Which late had ſeen Elijah riſe,
Sent by the high-aſcended ſeer,
To fill the king with ſhivering fear,
A ſtrange epiſtle came, which lays
Before him all his evil ways;
And tells him, for each wicked deed
What heavy judgments ſhall ſucceed.
The great events with ſpeed arrive;
Arabian troops with fury drive
Thro' his dominions; plunder, burn,
Then on his feeble palace turn
Their hoſtile rage; His treaſures take,
His wives and children captive make,
And leave him wretched. Nor alone
In this was God's reſentment known;

But

But he his hand upon him lays,
And ſmites him with a dire diſeaſe,
From which no remedy could ſave;
And ſoon it brought him to the grave.
Short was his reign, and full of care,
To him his youngeſt ſon was heir;
For the Arabians and their train
Had all the eldeſt princes ſlain.
Young Ahaziah mounts the throne,
And makes his father's ſins his own;
To Ahab's impious houſe ally'd,
He ſoon in Joram's quarrel dy'd.
When Joram againſt Syria fought,
He was to Jezreel wounded brought.
Here Judah's king a viſit pays,
And while he with the monarch ſtays
Jehu advanc'd, by Heaven decreed
To extirpate all Ahab's ſeed:
Then furious to the war he ſprings,
And fall before him both the kings.

When Ahaziah thus was ſlain,
His impious mother, proud and vain,
Nam'd Athaliah, ſeiz'd the throne,
And ſtood ſucceſſor to her ſon.
She like a cruel tyger flew,
And all her ſon's young offspring ſlew,
Except one infant; whom that day
His careful aunt had ſtolen away
Unknown, and hid from vulgar ſight,
Till time ſhould bring the prince to light.
This princeſs had the high prieſt wed:
Her royal brother, lately dead,
One year had reign'd; and now his child,
Hid in God's houſe, ſecurely ſmil'd.
Six years the babe conceal'd remain'd,
While Athaliah rul'd the land:
Now the high prieſt will make him known,
And fix him on his father's throne.
To the great men, with prudent care,
At firſt he opens the affair;

Then

Then troops procures, and arms prepares,
With all that in ſuch great affairs
Is neceſſary. Then the king
Upon a ſolemn day they bring
Into the temple: There they ſhed
The holy oil upon his head,
And place the crown. Vaſt ſhouts of joy
At once thro' the glad city fly,
And ſhake the throne. The tyrant queen
Was in the temple quickly ſeen,
To know the cauſe. The king ſhe ſees;
Then treaſon cries; and frighted flees.
They ſeize her; from the ſacred walls
They take, and by the ſword ſhe falls.
The ſingers ſing, the trumpets ſound,
And ſhouts of growing joy reſound.

HISTORY THE EIGHTH.

The Reigns of Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Jotham, and Ahaz, Kings of Judah.

2 *Kings*, ch. xv. xvi.—2 *Chron.* ch. xxv. *to* xxviii.

AT seven years old young Joash gain'd
His father's throne; and well he reign'd
In his minority. The priest,
His pious uncle, never ceas'd,
By his instructions, and his care,
The youthful monarch to prepare
For virtuous deeds. The people saw
In his young hands GOD's holy law;
And vow they will its precepts learn,
And to their fathers GOD return.
For Athaliah, lately slain,
Worshipp'd at Baals impious fane;

But

But now in haſte the people go,
And lay the ſtupid idol low:
And as in zealous rage they flew,
The prieſt before his altar flew.

'Twas the young monarch's early care
God's holy temple to repair,
And dignify the worſhip there.
He, while the high prieſt liv'd, abode
True to the worſhip of his God:
But when his holy head was laid,
Into the paths of error ſtray'd:
Falſe gods he ſerves, frequents the groves,
And idol-prieſts and altars loves.
The new high prieſt with horror ſaw
The nation thus forſake God's law;
And anxious for his country's weal,
Them he reproves with holy zeal.
The people he reproves in vain,
For he was in the temple ſlain:

The

The king commanded. As he falls,
He on his GOD for vengeance calls.
Nor was the vengeance long delay'd;
For Syria's hoſtile troops invade
The land of Judah. Bribes in vain
Strive their fell fury to reſtrain;
They like a ſtorm purſue their way,
The people and the princes ſlay,
Vaſt plunder take, and then return.
The feeble king was left to mourn
His ravag'd kingdom, half deſtroy'd;
And by his ſervants hands he dy'd,
In his own bed. He forty years
Had fill'd the throne; and now appears
Young Amaziah to ſucceed;
Who ſoon aveng'd the bloody deed.
Fix'd on his father's throne, with care
He muſter'd all his men of war.
Three hundred thouſand take the field,
To make the men of Edom yield:

From

From Iſrael's land, with martial fires;
An hundred thouſand more he hires:
But ſoon a prophet lets him know,
The men of Iſrael muſt not go.
Them he diſmiſs'd; but unreſtrain'd
They plunder, ere they leave the land.
Then he his war on Edom turns,
And all the rage of battle burns:
By his ſtrong troops ten thouſand ſlain
Were left upon the purple plain:
Ten thouſand more, with rage unknown,
Were from a rock's high ſummit thrown,
And daſh'd to pieces. Then return'd
The conquering king, and incenſe burn'd
To Edom's gods; and worſhip gave,
Tho' they their country could not ſave.
For this a ſeer reproves the king;
But he, perſiſting in the thing,
The prophet threatens; who reply'd,
The monarch ſoon ſhould be deſtroy'd.

Great

Great troubles then disturb his reign;
For Amaziah, proud and vain,
From Edom's conquest, urg'd the king
Of Israel's land his troops to bring,
And with him try the chance of war.
The monarch urg'd him to forbear;
But he persisting, to his cost,
In battle soon his army lost,
And liberty. The victor king
To great Jerusalem would bring
His royal captive; and he falls
To breaking down the city walls;
Seizes vast treasures, and returns.
The king too late his folly learns,
And for his pride he dearly pays;
For, weak and feeble all his days,
A warrior band his death conspires:
From them to Lachish he retires:
Him they pursu'd, and, void of fear,
In hot resentment slew him there.

Near

Near thirty years he fill'd the throne,
And was ſucceeded by his ſon
Uzziah; then about ſixteen.
This blooming monarch oft was ſeen
Amongſt his ſoldiers; for his care
Was a vaſt army to prepare.

In his young days, taught by a ſeer
The mighty God of Hoſts to fear,
He ſquar'd his conduct by the law,
And many proſperous days he ſaw.
In building he his care employs,
Great cities, walls, and ramparts, riſe;
Vaſt were his armies on the plains,
And he with martial glory reigns.
The Philiſtine, and Ammonite,
Were by his forces put to flight;
Vaſt towns and provinces he gains,
And war's firſt honours long maintains:
Till with the glories of his reign
Grown proud, and inſolent, and vain,

He on the prieſthood fix'd his eyes,
And this he ſeeks to make his prize.
Incenſe he burns: The prieſts oppoſe;
The raging king his anger ſhews:
That moment Heaven directs the blow,
And ſtrikes him leprous, white as ſnow.
Thus ſmitten by the wrath of Heaven,
The monarch from his throne was driven,
And an obſcure retreat he found;
While mighty earthquakes rock the ground,
And ſigns of wrath his realms abide,
There he in foul diſhonour dy'd.
Long was his reign. Full fifty years
Upon his head the crown appears;
But half that time, without command,
He was to his retreat conſtrain'd,
His ſon, young Jotham, judg'd the land.

This prince, ſoon as his father dy'd,
To vaſt deſigns his thoughts apply'd:

The

The walls of Salem he repairs,
And mighty forts and caſtles rears
On Judah's mountains, and her vales,
And o'er his foes his ſword prevails.
O'er Ammon he erects his ſway,
They annual tribute to him pay.
Full ſixteen years he fill'd the throne,
Then dying, left it to his ſon.

Jotham to Iſrael's God was true;
But from his worſhip Ahaz flew:
He, fooliſh, to vain idols turn'd,
To Moloch he his children burn'd;
And all the impious heathen train,
With horrid rites the land prophane.

Hence, wars and troubles quickly roſe,
And ſtrong and numerous were his foes.
Great Syria's troops with Iſrael join,
And all around their armies ſhine;
Ravage the country, plunder take,
And for the capital they make;

The princes and the nobles ſlay,
And mark with blood their cruel ſway.
Soon Ahaz on the hoſtile plain
Beheld an hundred thouſand ſlain,
And twice that number captive made,
And then to Iſrael's land convey'd:
But theſe the conquering king return'd,
For ſo the will of GOD, he learn'd.
As Judah's king in his diſtreſs
Will not revere his idols leſs,
The Philiſtine and Ammonite
With cruel ſtrokes his country ſmite:
But yet the LORD ſome pity ſhews,
And to the king his prophet goes,
And lets him know, that, for their pride,
His cruel foes ſhall be deſtroy'd.
Ahaz, his ruin to prevent,
To the Aſſyrian monarch ſent:
And to engage him in his cauſe,
Vaſt treaſures from the temple draws.

The

The king, propitious to his prayer,
Againſt Damaſcus turns his war:
Their king he ſlays, the town he takes,
And all the townſmen captive makes.
Ahaz, triumphing o'er his foes,
Then to Damaſcus gladly goes,
To meet the Aſſyrian king; and ſpies
An heathen altar; in his eyes
Worthy, for make, to be preferr'd
To the great altar of the LORD.
A model to the prieſt he ſends,
And the great brazen altar rends
From its fix'd ſtation; and behold
Its place by one of Syrian mold
Supply'd. And ſoon the molten ſea
Was from its baſis torn away,
By his prophane and impious ſtroke,
And all the holy veſſels broke.
Nor was his wickedneſs the leſs
In his affliction and diſtreſs;

To Syria's gods he altars rear'd,
And at their impious fanes appear'd;
And by example, and command,
He labour'd to corrupt the land.
In foul diſhonour thus he dy'd,
And his young ſon his place ſupply'd:
The ſceptre Hezekiah gain'd,
When Ahaz ſixteen years had reign'd.

HISTORY THE NINTH.

The Reigns of Hezekiah, and Manaſſeh, Kings of Judah.

2 *Kings*, ch. xviii. *to* xxi.—2 *Chron.* xxix. *to* xxxiii.

SOON as the king aſcends the throne,
He makes his great intentions known,
God's holy worſhip to reſtore,
And idols to revere no more.

He

He breaks their ſtatues, burns their groves,
And the whole impious train removes.
The brazen ſerpent he deſtroys,
Once in the deſert ſeen to riſe.
Now to an impious idol turn'd,
To it the people incenſe burn'd.
The monarch then, with pious care,
Urges the nation to prepare
Gon's holy paſſover to ſhare;
And Iſrael's kindred tribes invites
To join in the religious rites.
They the ſolemnity proclaim,
And to the feaſt great numbers came.
Then the young king with courage broke
The oppreſſive proud Aſſyrian yoke;
The Philiſtines with wrath he view'd,
And them his conquering ſword ſubdu'd;
Then fortifies his towns with care,
And all his ſubjects trains for war.

The Aſſyrian monarch unreſtrain'd
Pour'd like a deluge o'er the land;
Takes various towns, and Judah's king,
Oppreſs'd with fear, propos'd to bring
Whatever his demands require,
If from his land he will retire.
A vaſt enormous ſum he lays,
And this the king of Judah pays.

The proud Aſſyrian, not content,
Three of his mighty warriors ſent,
Who in inſulting language call
To Iſrael's troops upon the wall;
Exalt their maſter to the ſkies,
And ſay, who dare oppoſe him dies;
His martial glory loud proclaim,
And Iſraels GOD their tongues blaſpheme.

Their vaunts the king of Judah hears
With deep humility and tears.
Then to the man of GOD he ſends,
And great Iſaiah ſoon attends.

Thus

Thus ſaith the LORD, the prophet cry'd,
Regard not this bold ſon of pride:
Not long in arms the tyrant ſhines,
For I will blaſt his bold deſigns:
A frightful rumour he ſhall hear,
And like a meteor diſappear.—
Soon the aſſuming monarch heard
That Ethiopia's ſons appear'd
In arms againſt him. Thus impell'd,
His numerous armies quit the field:
But vaunting in his might and fame,
To Judah's king his letters came,
Full of each bold audacious word,
And blaſphemies againſt the LORD.
The king to GOD's high temple goes,
And the blaſphemous letters ſhews.
Then fervent to the LORD he pray'd,
Nor long the vengeance was delay'd.
Where the Aſſyrian army lies,
While midnight darkneſs veil'd the ſkies,

Swift whirling, like a raging flame,
In terror arm'd, death's angel came,
Quick thro' the camp like lightning flew,
Two hundred thouſand warriors ſlew,
And left them dead upon the plain.
Sennacherib ſees his army ſlain;
To his own land retires with ſpeed,
And by his ſons was doom'd to bleed.
Thus for his ſervant GOD appear'd,
And ſlew the tyrant that he fear'd.
But on the king a dire diſeaſe
Its cruel hand invenom'd lays:
And ſoon he hears the prophet cry,
Thy hour is come! prepare to die!—
Then to his GOD the monarch pray'd,
Who the deſcending ſtroke delay'd.
Soon at his bed the ſeer appear'd,
And let him know his prayers were heard;
That GOD had added to his days,
And bids him ſound his loſty praiſe:

For ſtill thou on the throne ſhalt ſhine,
And fifteen happy years be thine.—
Then a ſtrange ſign the prophet gave,
To prove, that GOD would ſurely ſave:
For when the circling ſhade ſhould gain
Upon the dial's crouded plain,
Ten full degrees it backward goes;
So the afflicted king had choſe.
From great Euphrates' rapid ſtream
A noble band of warriors came:
The friendly train rich preſents bring
From Babylon's exalted king;
For far as Shinar's land was heard
The wonder which had late appear'd.
Theſe noble friends from diſtant plains,
The king of Judah entertains;
And ere the princely ſtranger goes,
The treaſures of the temple ſhews,
And his own houſe. With heart elate,
He ſhews them all his kingly ſtate.

Of this the holy prophet heard,
And to the monarch thus declar'd:
Since of thy treaſures proud and vain,
Thou to this Babyloniſh train
Haſt all expos'd; then ſurely know,
That all to Babylon ſhall go.—
GOD's will be done;—the monarch cry'd:
He proſperous liv'd, and peaceful dy'd.
Near thirty years he fill'd the throne,
Then left it to his infant ſon.
Manaſſeh, twelve years old, ſucceeds,
But follows not his father's deeds;
Of low, ignoble, ſervile mind,
To every flagrant vice inclin'd;
He to no virtue will aſpire;
Ah! how degen'rate from his ſire!
He half a century feebly reign'd,
But neither wealth nor honour gain'd.
And now the impious heathen train
In Judah's land freſh footing gain:

Baal,

Baal, with his enormous brood
Of deities, obſcene and lewd;
And horrid Moloch, black as hell,
Again on Judah's mountains dwell.
The king their broken altars rears,
And at each idol fane appears:
In GOD's own houſe erects their ſhrines;
He in their filthy worſhip joins,
And by his poſitive command
Strives to enforce it on the land.
Wizards and fiends were his delight,
And all the ugly hags of night:
He by each horrid demon ſtood,
And in their cauſe ſhed ſeas of blood.
JEHOVAH now with anger burn'd,
To ſee the land to idols turn'd;
Reproves and threatens, by his ſeer;
The ſtupid monarch will not hear.
Then, like a wild devouring flame,
The Aſſyrian king againſt him came.

Manaſſeh,

Manaſſeh, of the war afraid,
Seeks the thick covert of the ſhade.
Amongſt the brambles ſoon he's found,
There ſeiz'd, and with ſtrong fetters bound;
To Babylon by force convey'd,
And in a gloomy dungeon laid.
Now in affliction and diſtreſs,
The king beholds his wickedneſs.
Then to his father's GOD he pray'd;
The GOD propitious ſends him aid.
To his own land and throne return'd,
JEHOVAH's mighty power he learn'd;
And ſet himſelf, with pious care,
His former errors to repair;
Pull'd down the altars which he rear'd,
In the great cauſe of GOD appear'd;
And following now his father's ways,
In peace and plenty ends his days.

HISTORY THE TENTH.

The Kings of Judah continued, from the Death of Manasseh, to the Babyloniſh Captivity.

2 *Kings*, ch. xxi. *to the End.*—2 *Chron.* ch. xxxiii. *to* xxxvi.

MANASSEH left the vacant throne
To Ammon, his unhappy ſon,
Who fooliſhly his reign begins,
And imitates his father's ſins:
Ah! could he but his folly view,
And follow his repentance too!
But he each impious idol loves,
Sets up their altars in the groves,
And on each lofty mountain's crown,
Which late his father had pull'd down:
His vices all the nation tire,
And his own men his death conſpire;

When

When ſoon, within the palace walls,
He by the aſſaſſins dagger falls.
To vengeance then the nation riſe,
And each audacious murderer dies.
Ammon two years had reign'd, and now
On young Joſiah's infant brow
They place the crown. The blooming king
At eight years old the nation bring
To rule the land: Before eighteen,
He in the houſe of GOD was ſeen.
JEHOVAH in his youth he ſought,
And his firſt vows to Zion brought;
The paths of true religion trod,
And turn'd the nation to their GOD.
In early youth, it was his care
GOD's holy temple to repair.
Thrice as they cleans'd the apartments round,
A copy of the law was found,
So long neglected, and forgot,
That half the nation knew it not.

The

The holy book, with ſolemn dread,
The king commanded to be read.
The conſcious land with trembling awe
Hear the dire curſes of the law:
The folly of their ways they learn,
And to their fathers GOD return.
They then, by the young king's command,
With pious zeal go thro' the land;
And on the mountains, or the plains,
Deſtroy the various idol fanes,
And break their ſtatues. Not the grave
Can the prieſts bones from vengeance ſave;
They tear them from the hollow ground,
And where an idol-altar's found
Burn them thereon. To Bethel then
Proceed the king and mighty men;
And Jeroboam's altar fed
With bones of prieſts and prophets dead.

Amongſt the graves appears a ſtone
With nettles ſkirted, moſs o'ergrown,
The blind inſcription ſcarcely known:
The enquiring king this anſwer gains,
Here lie the prophet's dear remains
Whoſe prophecy thou haſt fulfill'd;
Whom long ago the lion kill'd.—
Servant of GOD! the monarch cries,
Thy ſacred duſt in ſafety lies:
Here reſt thy bones, on Bethel's plains;
To lateſt time thy name remains.—
With ſteady zeal, the king purſues
His pious and religious views:
And with his princely train unites
To aboliſh all the horrid rites
Of heathen worſhip. Then he ſlew
The odious necromancing crew;
And ſent the wizard train to dwell
Each with the fiend he lov'd ſo well.

The king the track of honour trod,
Set up the worſhip of his GOD,
Kept the paſſover's ſacred feaſt;
And every day he never ceas'd
To ſerve the LORD. But Judah's crimes,
And foul revolt ſo many times;
The ſeas of blood Manaſſeh ſhed;
GOD's holy prieſts and prophets dead;
Theſe things to vengeance rous'd the ſkies,
And Judah's pious monarch dies.

From roaring Nile, the Egyptian king
His mighty armies ſtrives to bring
Far as Euphrates' ſurging ſtream,
And thro' the land of Judah came.
The army's journey to oppoſe,
With hoſtile force Joſiah goes.
The monarch urg'd him to forbear:
Joſiah will purſue the war;
And near monnt Carmel's flowery ſide
The quarrel ſoon the armies try'd.

The war was fatal: for it brings
The death of Judah's beſt of kings:
A luckleſs ſhaft his boſom tore,
And ſoon the monarch was no more.
The affected nation, many days
With tears his funeral honours pays;
And mournful elegies recall
The memory of his hapleſs fall.
Jehoahaz, Joſiah's ſon,
Succeeded to the vacant throne.
The father thirty years had reign'd;
And when the ſon the kingdom gain'd,
He loſt it ſoon: For, from the crown
The king of Egypt put him down.
His haughty heart with rancour burn'd,
And when he from the war return'd,
Judah's new king he took in chains,
While o'er the land his brother reigns.
The king in Egypt long remain'd;
The proud Egyptian tax'd the land.

Jehoiakim

Jehoiakim the ſceptre ſways,
But only evil were his ways.
With cruelty he ſtain'd his throne,
And made each hateful vice his own:
One of God's prophets by him dies;
He burns another's prophecies;
Gives orders to detain the ſeer,
And ſtands determin'd not to hear.
A prophet's blood for vengeance calls,
And quickly on the king it falls.

Soon like a wild devouring flame,
The Babyloniſh monarch came:
Jeruſalem at once he gains,
And Judah's monarch wears his chains:
But ſoon reſtor'd to regal ſway,
Is doom'd to ſerve, and tribute pay.
After three years the king rebell'd;
Him ſoon proud Babel's monarch quell'd:
The country he in ruin laid,
And whom he pleaſed captive made.

The king his ſafety ſeeks in vain;
He by the conqueror's ſword was ſlain:
And with contempt before unknown,
His body in a ditch was thrown.
Ten years he reign'd. His ſon ſucceeds,
And imitates his father's deeds;
Jehoiakin the ſceptre held,
But as his father had rebell'd,
After three months around his towers
The Babyloniſh army pours.
Unable to prevent his fate,
The king ſubmits; the city gate
He opens; goes into the fields,
And to the hoſtile monarch yields.
Not much he by ſubmiſſion gains,
For ſoon he's laid in heavy chains;
And, to compleat his bitter woes,
To Babylon he captive goes.
With him the princes of the land,
The judges, and the warriors ſtand,

The princeſſes, the noble fair,
And each ingenuous man was there.
All theſe by the ſtern king's command,
Alike muſt leave their native land:
Them Babylon's proud walls incloſe,
And ſtrong and ſcornful were their foes.
But after long revolving years
Some comfort to the king appears:
The mighty monarch from his throne
With piteous kindneſs on him ſhone:
He Judah's chief from priſon brings,
And ſets above the captive kings.

Now o'er the weak enfeebled land
Exalted to the firſt command,
And charg'd an heavy tax to bring,
The uncle of the former king,
Nam'd Zedekiah, next appears;
The ſhadow of a crown he wears,
But wants the power: Yet ſoon proceeds
To ſtain his throne with wicked deeds;

And each deteſted vice he lov'd.
Great Jeremiah oft reprov'd,
Exhorted, warn'd, yet void of fear,
The ſtupid monarch will not hear,
But with reſentment view'd the ſeer.

Eight years in peace the crown he held,
Then againſt Babylon rebell'd.
The king that rais'd him to the throne,
Soon made his vengeful fury known:
From great Euphrates' ſurging ſtream,
With hoſtile rage his armies came;
When Zion's towers they ſoon ſurround,
And ſtrive to beat them to the ground.
From roaring Nile, the Egyptian king
His mighty armies ſeeks to bring
To their relief: But ſtrives in vain;
His march oppos'd, his warriors ſlain,
Too late the Chaldean force he learns,
And back to Iſrael griev'd returns.

Nebuchadnezzzar,

Nebuchadnezzar, more enrag'd,
The war with growing fury wag'd.
Jeruſalem he cloſely preſs'd;
And while his lines the town inveſt,
The prophet urg'd, the king might yet
Find ſafety, if he would ſubmit;
But if he will the foe withſtand,
Prodigious woes are near at hand.
The ſtupid monarch will not hear,
But into priſon ſends the ſeer.
Two years the adverſe lines ſat down,
Before they took the royal town:
Then in the night, for want of bread,
The king and all his warriors fled.
With rage purſues the Chaldee train,
And overtake them on the plain
Near Jericho. They apprehend
The king, and him to Riblah ſend;
Where the ſtern king who gave his crown,
Regards him with a gloomy frown.

He at his mercy helpleſs lies,
Before his face his offspring dies,
And then they tear out both his eyes;
His limbs with brazen fetters bind,
And he's to Babylon aſſign'd.
Then on the town the army falls,
Beat down the loſty towers and walls;
Thro' all the ſtreets with fury fly,
Burn, plunder, ravage and deſtroy;
The temple burn, its veſſels take,
The natives ſlay, or captive make;
And Zion, whom all men deſpiſe,
An awful heap of ruin lies.

Then back to his own ſtately towers
The Babyloniſh monarch pours,
In all the dreadful pomp of war,
With ſpoils of nations from afar:
Myriads of captives he retains,
The flower of Judah's emptied plains;

And God's rich temple's holy things,
To Babylon he with him brings.
Thus, for his Iſrael's evil deeds,
The eternal God in wrath proceeds.
They durſt reject his high command;
He drives them from the promis'd land:
And now on Shinar's ſervile plains,
In captive bonds their race remains.
Long had divine forbearance ſtay'd,
And mercy the vaſt ſtroke delay'd.
Jehovah by his prophets tries
To teach the nation to be wiſe;
And from theſe dreadful ills to ſave,
He long repeated warnings gave.
First in the high prophetic band
Behold the great Elijah ſtand.
This man of God from Tiſhbe came,
And by his wonders roſe to fame:
The cauſe of God he would maintain,
In Ahab's lewd and impious reign:

His potent prayers ſhut up the ſkies,
And Heaven all rain or dew denies.
Three tedious years the drought remains,
And burning ſuns conſum'd the plains:
Then to his God he prays again,
Black roll the clouds, and burſts the rain.
On lofty Carmel's flowery ſide,
All Baal's prophets he defy'd,
And ſoon the bold impoſtors dy'd.
To ſhun his foes, the prophet came
To Cherith's ſlow and ſilent ſtream;
Here the green graſs he made his bed,
And was each day by ravens fed.
The brook its water now denies;
The ſeer an angel ſoon ſupplies;
With heavenly bread his hunger ſtays,
With which he travell'd forty days:
In the lone deſert takes abode,
And there converſes with his God.

He

He then return'd to Sidon's plains,
Where a poor widow he ſuſtains,
Whoſe ſcant proviſions knew no waſte,
While the three years of famine laſt:
And to relieve this widow's care,
Her ſon, tho' dead, he rais'd by prayer.
In Ahab's cruel bloody reign,
He of the monarch durſt complain;
Aſſert GOD's violated laws,
And boldly plead in Naboth's cauſe.
When ſick king Ahaziah lies,
His death Elijah propheſys.
The raging king his troops will ſend,
To bring the prophet to his end:
Then from the ſkies he calls down fire,
Two captains and their men expire.
In the moſt dark degenerate times,
Stain'd with the very worſt of crimes;
When vice and lewdneſs ſhameleſs ſtand,
And idols cover'd all the land;

Almoſt

Almoſt alone, for GOD he ſtood,
And ſpent his days in doing good.
Great Jordan's current he divides,
And takes his way between the tides:
When GOD, his ſervent love to crown,
Commands his blazing chariot down,
And bears his prophet to the ſkies.
His weeping ſervant ſees him riſe.
To him Eliſha next ſucceeds,
And imitates his noble deeds.
He as he roſe obſerv'd him well,
And ſeiz'd his mantle as it fell.
With the rich prize the prophet came,
And ſmites great Jordan's ſwelling ſtream;
Now, where's Eiljah's GOD! he cries:—
The parting ſtream before him flies;
The wondering pupils ſee him come,
And hail him prophet in his room.
At Jericho his power prevails,
And he the bitter fountain heals.

To Bethel then approach'd the ſeer,
Him the vain youths inſult and jeer;
Two furious bears upon them fly,
And for the bold offence they die.
To Iſrael and Judah's kings,
He in the deſert water brings;
There copious roll the cooling waves,
And he the lives of armies ſaves.
A prophet's widow he relieves,
And ſuch a ſum of money gives
As makes the world upon her ſmile,
By a vaſt increaſe of her oil.
To Shunam's hoſpitable dome
They oft beheld the prophet come:
The pious matron had no heir,
He gains the bleſſing by his prayer:
In the parch'd field the infant dies,
He prays, and ſoon beholds him riſe.
From chryſtal Pharpar's winding ſtream,
To Iſrael's land a warrior came;

O'erſpread

O'erſpread with leproſy he ſtands,
And of the king a cure demands;
The king diſdains a claim ſo odd,
And aſks him, if he's thought a god?
But when the great miſtake he knows,
The captain to the prophet goes.
The man of GOD the order gave,
That he muſt waſh in Jordan's wave.
The noble warrior, with diſdain,
Rejects the action as too mean;
But ſoon perſuaded for his good,
Seven times he plunges in the flood.
With full ſucceſs the flood he tries;
Freſh as a child he's ſeen to riſe,
The princely captain comes once more,
And ſtands before the prophet's door;
He offers great rewards to give;
No gifts the prophet will receive:

And he perſiſting to refuſe,
His journey then the chief purſues.
But, loth ſo rich a prize to loſe,
The prophet's ſervant overtakes;
The chief a noble preſent makes.
Eliſha knows his ſervant's view,
And gives him the diſtemper too.
When Syria's troops invade the land,
Where-e'er their tents in order ſtand,
He lets the king of Iſrael know,
And diſappoints the haughty foe.
When famine in Samaria rag'd,
He the griev'd monarch's wrath aſſwag'd;
And cry'd, To-morrow ſhall abound;—
Then as he promis'd, ſo they found.
When on the bed of death he lay,
To Iſrael's king he ſhew'd the way
Of conqueſt o'er his Syrian foe,
Who laid the mighty nation low.

And when the ſilent grave contains
The holy prophet's dear remains,
A train that all in tears attend
The corps of a departed friend,
Commit it to Eliſha's grave,
Which hath the wonderous power to ſave;
To the dead man it vigour gives,
Who inſtantly revives and lives.
Next after him great Jonah roſe,
And Heaven's high will ſublimely ſhews.
To Nineveh * God ſent the ſeer;
But he refuſing to go there,
To diſtant Joppa takes his way,
And ſeeks to croſs the foaming ſea.
But ſable clouds involve the ſkies,
And out the furious tempeſt flies:

The

* Nineveh was the capital of the Aſſyrian monarchy. It ſtood on the banks of the river Tigris; was near fifty miles in circumference; and in Jonah's time was ſo very populous, as to contain ſix ſcore thouſand perſons who could not diſtinguiſh their right hand from their left; which is ſuppoſed to mean young children.

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Engraved for Fellows's Hist. of the Bible.

Jonah cast into the Sea.

The ſhip ſcarce rides the roaring main,
The pilot holds the helm in vain:
The mariners oppreſs'd with care,
Each to his GOD preſents his prayer.
They then caſt lots to find the cauſe,
And the black dye the prophet draws:
They plunge him headlong in the waves,
But Iſrael's GOD his prophet ſaves.
They think he juſtly finds his fate,
And ſoon the dreadful ſtorms abate.
A mighty fiſh the LORD prepar'd,
Which ſwallow'd down the frighted bard.
Three days in its dark maw he lies,
And to his GOD repenting cries:
The LORD his ſervant's prayers will hear,
And is in every trouble near;
For by his power the fiſh, conſtrain'd,
Throws out the ſeer ſafe on dry land.
No longer he reluctant ſtands,
But follows all his GOD's commands;

To Nineveh immediate goes,
The city's ſin and danger ſhews:
The people trembled as they heard,
And were for their repentance ſpar'd.
Iſaiah next in order came,
Of noble birth, and mighty fame:
He his deep prophecies begins,
Reproving Iſrael for their ſins;
And then deſcribes, in lofty ſtrain,
The great Meſſiah, and his reign.
In the moſt dark degenerate times,
He warn'd the people of their crimes;
And ſtrove the ſtupid land to draw
To GOD's high worſhip, and his law.
When Hezekiah gain'd the crown,
Threw every idol-altar down;
Serv'd in his youth the eternal GOD,
And virtue's path's ſecurely trod:
The holy prophet was his guide;
And when the Aſſyrian monarch try'd,

In haughty, impious, vaunting ſtrain,
To prove his truſt in GOD was vain;
The ſacred ſeer ſupports the king,
And ſays the LORD will ſuccour bring:
For him he on his GOD will call,
And propheſys the tyrant's fall.
And laſt, when mortal ſickneſs ſeiz'd,
The dire complaint the prophet eas'd;
By Heaven's command, relief he gives,
And the dejected monarch lives.
But in Manaſſeh's wicked reign
Iſaiah propheſy'd in vain;
The king the land with idols fill'd,
And in his rage the prophet kill'd.

Great

* It is ſuppoſed, that the prophet Iſaiah was of the royal family of Judah, and that he was father-in-law to king Manaſſeh. The noble ſtile of his prophecies gives reaſon to believe that he was of no mean extraction. And it is a conſtant tradition, both of Jews and Chriſtians, that he was ſawn in ſunder in the reign of Manaſſeh.

Great Jeremiah laſts appears,
With lamentations, and with tears,
For Iſrael's moſt atrocious crimes:
He ſpends his days in evil times,
And propheſys, as GOD commands,
Deſtruction to the heathen lands.
In young Joſiah's infant reign
He firſt began the ſacred ſtrain;
And to the four ſucceeding kings
He oft unwelcome tidings brings;
And lets the impious nation know,
To Babylon they'll ſurely go.
When Zedekiah laſt appears,
Yokes round his neck the prophet wears,
In token that his native land
A foreign king would ſoon command.
When an aſſault the Chaldees make,
He ſays they will the city take;
Urges to yield, in earneſt ſtrain,
And tells them Egypt's help is vain.

The ſtupid nation will not hear,
But in their rage inſult the ſeer:
To priſon ſent, he there remains
Till Babel's king the city gains.
In kindneſs then, the conquering foe
Let the afflicted prophet go.
All theſe, and more, inſpir'd by Heaven,
To Iſrael's ſons had warning given:
But their prodigious crimes ariſe
Above the mercy of the ſkies;
And them the LORD, with vengeful hand,
Scatters like duſt o'er Shinar's land.
Then to Euphrates' banks they came,
And mournful ſat beſide the ſtream.
No heart remain'd for ſacred ſong;
Their uſeleſs harps on willows hung:
And while the rapid current flows,
They think on Zion's future woes.
The nation all in grief appears,
And with the ſtream they mix their tears.

The End of the Third Volume.

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